



Occupational Standards Gym Instructor



Contents

- A1. Conduct health screening and assess client exercise preferences, barriers and goals
- B1. Apply principles of anatomy and physiology in a fitness context
- B3. Plan and instruct exercise in the gym
- D1. Provide motivation and support as part of exercise instruction
- D3. Promote healthy eating and physical activity
- G1. Promote health and safety in the fitness environment
- H1. Provide customer service in health and fitness
- I1. Develop professional practice and personal career in the health and fitness industry



Practical Assessment Guidelines

A1. Conduct health screening and assess client exercise preferences, barriers and goals

This standard describes the competence required to identify the fitness requirements of clients through the use of a screening form and collecting information about exercise preferences, barriers to exercise and goal setting.

The standard also covers how to advise clients on appropriate fitness facilities and services.

Performance Criteria

Exercise professionals should be able to:

Conduct health screening

1. Establish a rapport with clients
2. Administer health screening questionnaires following organisational requirements
3. Collect screening information from clients, which could include:
 - lifestyle evaluation,
 - time availability,
 - exercise history,
 - likes and dislikes,
 - medical history,
 - medications,
 - informed consent,
 - clearance letter from an allied health professional or medical practitioner
4. Show sensitivity and empathy to clients and the information they provide
5. Follow an agreed process for the gathering, storage and disposal of client information
6. Ensure the privacy, security and communication needs of clients and any legal or ethical considerations are met
7. Gain client feedback to ensure they understand the reasons for the collection of information and how it will be used
8. Operate within professional boundaries and refer to other professionals as appropriate

Agree fitness activities clients

9. Provide relevant information on the impact of poor lifestyle behaviours on health and fitness to clients
10. Explain the perceived benefits clients can expect from an exercise programme
11. Identify and document clients' exercise preferences
12. Identify potential barriers to clients achieving their exercise goals and discuss and document possible solutions
13. Work with clients to agree short, medium and long-term goals appropriate to their needs
14. Explain the purpose of assessing preferences, goals and barriers to the client
15. Match the fitness goals of clients to available products and services
16. Identify clients' fitness requirements and provide clear information about appropriate exercise programmes and services
17. Agree needs and readiness to participate with clients
18. Identify and agree strategies to prevent drop out or relapse

Knowledge and Understanding

Exercise professionals should know and understand:

- K1 Organisational policies and procedures for the collection, use and storage of personal client information
- K2 Different ways of establishing rapport with different types of clients, taking account of, for example, gender, age, social class, current level of health and fitness, ethnicity and culture
- K3 The purpose and content of basic health screening questionnaires and what may happen if health screening information is not collected and correctly processed
- K4 Fitness industry standards and practices for client health screening
- K5 Different types of information which can be collected from clients and methods of collection
- K6 How to analyse and interpret collected information so that client needs and goals can be identified
- K7 Typical contraindications to physical activity and how to respond to these
- K8 Correct methods of gathering, storing and disposing of client information
- K9 Professional boundaries and how to refer to other professionals
- K10 How to set short, medium and long term goals with clients
- K11 Typical barriers which may prevent clients achieving their goals and how to overcome them
- K12 The impact of lifestyle behaviours on health and fitness and the benefits of exercise and physical activity
- K13 How to manage the expectations of clients related to their participation in exercise
- K14 How to work with clients to develop, agree and record client goals
- K15 Why it is important to base goal setting on proper analysis of clients' needs
- K16 Features and benefits of different fitness industry products and services to enable clients to receive accurate advice about the most appropriate programmes and services for their needs and fitness goals
- K17 Strategies which can prevent drop out or relapse

B1. Apply principles of anatomy and physiology in a fitness context

This standard describes the competence required to apply an understanding of human body structure, systems and terminology as they relate to fitness instruction. The standard covers the structure and function of the circulatory system, respiratory system, the skeleton, the muscular system, nervous system and energy systems and their relation to exercise.

Performance Criteria

Exercise professionals should be able to:

1. Apply relevant anatomical and physiological terminology in the provision of fitness advice
2. Use anatomical and physiological terminology and describe and demonstrate movements of the body to clients
3. Apply knowledge of the body's systems to fitness instruction
4. Apply an understanding of the structure and function of the musculoskeletal system when providing information about exercise to clients
5. Relate the type and the structure of joints to joint mobility, joint integrity and risk of injury when planning exercise programmes and providing information to clients
6. Use knowledge of the structure of skeletal muscle and the process of muscle contraction to plan and develop exercise programmes
7. Analyse common exercises to identify to clients the joint action occurring, the muscle responsible and the type of contraction
8. Apply correct postural alignment for exercises
9. Relate the structure and function of the circulatory system and respiratory system to fitness activities
10. Apply knowledge of the structure and function of the cardiovascular system when providing information to clients
11. Apply knowledge of the structure and function of the nervous system to fitness activities and its role in the control of movement and exercise
12. Explain the effect of exercise intensity on the energy substrate to clients during exercise instruction
13. Apply the limiting factors of the body's energy systems to the setting of exercise intensities when instructing fitness activities
14. Apply knowledge of anatomy and physiology to analyse and identify client requirements and needs in relation to fitness instruction

Knowledge and Understanding

Exercise professionals should know and understand:

- K1 Relevant anatomical and physiological terminology in the provision of fitness advice
- K2 The structure and function of the circulatory system
- location, function and structure of the heart,
 - how blood moves through the four chambers of the heart,
 - systemic and pulmonary circulation,
 - the structure and functions of blood vessels,
 - blood pressure,
 - blood pressure classifications
- K3 The structure and function of the respiratory system
- location, function and structure of the lungs,
 - main muscles involved in breathing,

- passage of air through the respiratory tract,
- process of gaseous exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the lungs

- K4 The structure and function of the skeleton
- basic functions of the skeleton,
 - structures of the axial skeleton,
 - structures of the appendicular skeleton,
 - classification of bones,
 - structure of long bone,
 - stages of bone growth,
 - posture in terms of:
 - curves of the spine,
 - neutral spine alignment,
 - potential ranges of motion of the spine
 - postural deviations to include kyphosis, lordosis, scoliosis and the effect of pregnancy
- K5 Joints in the skeleton
- classification of joints,
 - structure of synovial joints,
 - types of synovial joints and their range of motion,
 - joint movement potential and joint actions
- K6 The muscular system
- the three types of muscle tissue,
 - the characteristics and functions of the three types of muscle tissue,
 - the basic structure of skeletal muscle,
 - names and locations the skeletal muscles,
 - structure and function of the pelvic floor muscles,
 - different types of muscle action,
 - joint actions brought about by specific muscle group contractions,
 - skeletal muscle fibre types and their characteristics
- K7 Energy systems and their relation to exercise
- how carbohydrates, fats and proteins are used in the production of energy/adenosine triphosphate,
 - the use of the three energy systems during aerobic and anaerobic exercise
- K8 The nervous system and its relation to exercise
- role and functions of the nervous system,
 - principles of muscle contraction,
 - 'all or none law'/motor unit recruitment,
 - how exercise can enhance neuromuscular connections and improve motor fitness
- K9 The acute physiological responses and physiological adaptations of the body's systems to exercise
- K10 The effects of commencing, sustaining and ceasing types of training are described in terms of physiological responses
- K11 How to use anatomy and physiology principles in the design of exercise programmes and in providing exercise advice and instruction

B3. Plan and instruct exercise in the gym

This standard describes the competence required to plan, demonstrate, supervise and monitor gym based exercise. The standard covers collecting information, planning gym programmes, instructing in the gym and supervising exercise. Monitoring client progress and adapting gym programmes is also covered.

Performance Criteria

Exercise professionals should be able to:

Collect and use information to plan gym programmes

1. Collect clients' health screening information
2. Identify clients'
 - current fitness profile,
 - training history,
 - exercise preferences,
 - exercise contraindications
 - specific fitness goals
3. Establish the physical, psychological and social reasons for clients' participation in an exercise program
4. Identify clients' needs and potential and any possible risks from participation in a gym programme
5. Identify the joint movements and muscles that clients target or strengthen according to their needs
6. Explain the relative contribution to aerobic and anaerobic fitness of recommended activities to clients
7. Follow legal and ethical requirements for the security and confidentiality of client information

Plan gym programmes

8. Apply the principles and variables of fitness to plan programmes to meet client goals or to achieve general fitness and health gains
9. Select gym exercises that will help clients to develop one or more of:
 - cardiovascular fitness,
 - muscular fitness,
 - flexibility
10. Select equipment for gym programmes as appropriate to client needs
11. Plan realistic timings and sequences for exercise
12. Help clients to identify barriers to adherence and how to overcome them
13. Plan how to minimise any risks relevant to the programme
14. Record programme plans in an appropriate format

Instruct gym exercise

15. Ensure appropriate equipment is in place
16. Describe planned exercises, including their physical and technical demands
17. Teach effective warm up and cool down activities
18. Adapt exercises with suitable progressions and regressions according to client needs
19. Explain and demonstrate correct movements and techniques for performing gym based exercise (resistance, cardiovascular, flexibility) to clients and explain their purpose and expected results
20. Use instructional techniques to teach the correct technique for gym based exercise
21. Advise clients of safety considerations for gym based exercise equipment
22. Encourage feedback from clients to confirm their understanding of the exercises and to identify any difficulties

Supervise gym sessions

23. Observe client training sessions
24. Apply spotting techniques to ensure safety and enhance performance
25. Provide feedback and instructing points which are timely, clear and motivational
26. Provide on-going motivation and support to clients to encourage adherence
27. Recognise the signs and symptoms of overtraining and act accordingly

Monitor client progress, review and adapt gym programmes

28. Review the outcomes of working with clients and take account of client feedback
29. Identify when a review of clients' exercise programme is necessary
30. Reassess clients' fitness levels to determine the effectiveness of their current exercise programme
31. Re-establish clients' specific fitness goals
32. Modify clients' exercise programmes according to results of fitness reassessments and any changing requirements
33. Provide positive and constructive feedback to clients on their progress and any recommended changes

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Knowledge and Understanding

Exercise professionals should know and understand:

For the whole standard

- K1 Legislative and organisational policies and procedures to support safe and effective exercise including safe use of equipment
- K2 Manufacturers' equipment specifications for use, care and checking of equipment
- K3 Anatomical terminology and application to exercise technique
- K4 Structure and function of joints and muscles
- K5 Structure and function of the musculoskeletal, cardiorespiratory and metabolic body systems to determine the benefits and appropriateness of different exercises to meet client needs
- K6 Effects of different exercise components on the major body systems to enable safe and appropriate exercise planning
- K7 The application of the principles and variables of fitness to the components of fitness
- K8 Motivational techniques to support client adherence to the fitness programme
- K9 Risk assessment and management relevant to exercise in the gym

Collecting and using information to plan gym programmes

- K10 The factors, based on client screening, which may affect safe exercise participation
- K11 The information needed to plan gym-based exercise
- K12 How to collect the required information, including using interviews and questionnaires, making observations and taking physical measurements
- K13 Reasons for temporary deferral of exercise and referral to other professionals
- K14 The needs and potential of the clients including reasons for and barriers to participation in exercise
- K15 Principles of informed consent
- K16 How to identify and agree goals and objectives for a programme based on collected information

Planning gym programmes

- K17 A range of resistance exercises and exercise programmes to enable selection and implementation of appropriate programmes to improve or maintain the fitness of clients
- K18 How to plan to use a range of cardiovascular machines, resistance machines and free weights
- K19 How to apply the principles and variables of fitness to a range of activities which will achieve health and fitness benefits and the clients' goals
- K20 How to plan a range of exercises for individual clients to develop:
 - cardio-vascular fitness,
 - muscular fitness,
 - flexibility,
 - motor skills
- K21 How to record plans appropriately

Instructing gym exercise

- K22 How to use a range of equipment to achieve the clients' goals
- K23 A range of suitable warm up and cool down activities
- K24 The health and environmental factors which can influence safety
- K25 The factors which effect group/individual working space
- K26 Methods of monitoring exercise intensity
- K27 Exercises that are safe and appropriate for clients, including alternatives to potentially harmful exercises
- K28 Safe and effective alignment for a range of gym-based exercise positions to cover use of:
 - cardio-vascular machines,
 - resistance machines,
 - free weights
- K29 How to give technically correct demonstrations and explain the use of a range of cardiovascular and resistance machines, and free weights
- K30 How to adjust incorrect or unsafe exercise techniques
- K31 The importance of health and safety in the facility and paying close attention to possible hazards and the reporting procedures for health and safety

Supervising gym sessions

- K32 How to observe a range of clients in the gym
- K33 The importance of providing fitness advice to clients in the gym and how to offer fitness advice in a gym environment
- K34 The purpose of gym-based exercises and how to break exercise/movements down to their component parts
- K35 Signs and symptoms of poor adaptation to training and overtraining
- K36 How to communicate with clients in the gym environment
- K37 Techniques to provide motivation and support to clients in the gym

Monitoring client progress and reviewing and adapting gym programmes

- K38 Different methods of adapting gym programmes to ensure appropriate progression and/or regression
- K39 How to identify when to review a client's programme
- K40 How to collect client feedback
- K41 How to modify fitness programmes according to results of fitness reassessments and changing requirements
- K42 How to give positive feedback to clients about their progress and changes to the programme

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Gym exercise – equipment and training specification

Cardiovascular training

Cardiovascular equipment used in designing gym programmes may include:

- upright cycle,
- recumbent cycle,
- treadmill,
- stepper,
- rowing machine,
- elliptical trainer,
- cross trainer

Cardiovascular training specifications used in gym programmes may include:

- exercises,
- equipment,
- intensity,
- duration,
- frequency,
- heart-rate training zones

Resistance training

Resistance training equipment used in designing gym programmes may include

- machines,
- free weights (bars, dumbbells, collars, straps, barbells, benches),
- body weight,
- benches,
- racks,
- exercise balls,
- elastic resistance,
- proprioception and stability training devices

Resistance training specifications used in gym programmes may include:

- exercises,
- equipment,
- repetitions,
- sets,
- resistance,
- intensity,
- frequency,
- variations

Resistance exercises may include:

- bench and chest press,
- flye,
- cable crossover,
- shoulder press,
- lateral and front-arm raise,
- shrug,
- upright row,
- shoulder internal and external rotation,
- biceps, preacher and hammer curl,
- overhead triceps press,
- lying triceps extensions and press,
- triceps kickback,
- bent over and one-arm row,
- supported and t-bar row,
- pullover,
- wrist curl,
- bent over lateral raises and reverse flye,
- squat,
- lunge,
- deadlift – bent and stiff leg,
- calf raise,
- hip abduction and adduction,
- leg curl,
- extension and press,
- hack squat,
- back and hip extension (glute-ham raise),
- abdominal, including oblique and reverse, crunch, abdominal isometric hold,
- basic core stability and proprioceptive exercises,
- lat pull-downs,
- seated row.

Performance Criteria

Flexibility training

Flexibility training specifications may include:

- target muscles,
- range of motion,
- duration,
- type of stretch,
- static,
- dynamic,
- proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation (PNF)

D1. Provide motivation and support as part of exercise instruction

This standard describes the competence required to provide motivation and support to exercise clients.

The standard covers exercise preferences, and barriers to exercise and how to overcome them.

Goal setting, motivation techniques and factors that affect exercise adherence are also covered.

Performance Criteria

Exercise professionals should be able to:

Assist clients to develop motivational strategies

1. Identify clients' reasons for taking part in regular exercise and physical activity
2. Identify clients' preferences for exercise
3. Ensure clients understand the benefits of taking part in exercise and physical activity
4. Provide clients with accurate information about the recommended amount of physical activity for them to derive health benefits
5. Inform clients about opportunities for regular physical activity appropriate to their needs, abilities and preferences
6. Identify potential barriers to clients taking part in exercise and physical activity and work with clients to reduce these
7. Work with clients to make best use of incentives, preferences and rewards

Support client motivation

8. Help clients to develop and follow through their own motivational strategies
9. Use personal attitudes, actions and values to positively influence clients exercise adherence and behaviour
10. Apply a variety of motivational techniques when training clients
11. Use effective verbal and nonverbal communication skills when instructing clients to optimise motivation and performance
12. Provide positive reinforcement and feedback to clients to positively influence exercise behaviour
13. Increase confidence in clients

Knowledge and Understanding

Exercise professionals should know and understand:

- K1 How to support clients to adhere to exercise/physical activity
- K2 Why it is important for a client to take personal responsibility for their own fitness and motivation
- K3 How to assist clients to develop their own strategy for motivation and adherence
- K4 Different behaviour change approaches to encourage adherence to exercise/physical activity
- K5 How to form effective working relationships with clients
- K6 The typical barriers to exercise/physical activity that clients experience and how to address them
- K7 How incorporating clients' exercise/physical activity preferences into their programme can strengthen motivation and adherence
- K8 Different incentives and rewards that can strengthen clients' motivation and adherence
- K9 The typical goals and expectations that clients have
- K10 The types of barriers individual clients may face when undertaking physical activity and achieving their goals and how to help clients identify and overcome these barriers
- K11 The types of incentives and rewards that may be appropriate to a range of different clients
- K12 The types of exercise preferences that different clients may have
- K13 The communication skills needed to assist clients with motivation
- K14 How to interpret client responses including body language and other forms of behaviour especially when undertaking physical activity
- K15 The health benefits of regular physical exercise
- K16 The amount of physical activity required to achieve health benefits
- K17 How to assist clients to develop their own motivational strategy
- K18 The stages of change a person may go through when taking part in regular physical activity
- K19 Human behavioural change related to the different stages of change
- K20 Appropriate intervention strategies for each stage of behavioural change
- K21 The requirements for successful behavioural change
- K22 Personal, environmental and cognitive factors and their potential effect on exercise adherence

D3. Promote healthy eating and physical activity

This standard describes the competence required to promote healthy eating and physical activity to clients.

The standard describes the performance outcomes and skills and knowledge required to provide basic healthy eating information and advice to fitness clients who have no major health concerns. The standard requires the application of nutritional standards and guidelines to provide accurate information to clients and the ability to recognise and work within professional limitations.

Performance Criteria

Exercise professionals should be able to:

Promote healthy eating and nutrition to clients

1. Explain the general features of healthy eating to clients
2. Explain the concept of a well-balanced diet and regular exercise to promote good health when providing information to clients
3. Explain the interaction between healthy eating options and physical activity and obtain information about current nutritional intake and physical activity levels of clients
4. Provide information to clients about the fundamental principles of healthy eating to improve overall health
5. Apply knowledge of the general principles of healthy eating to provide basic information to clients about healthy eating options and requirements for exercising individuals
6. Observe the industry standards for giving healthy eating information to clients and refer clients with healthy eating or dietary concerns to a suitably qualified medical professional/ dietician
7. Work within the current legal and ethical limitations of a fitness instructor in providing healthy eating information

Provide clients with information on body composition management

8. Evaluate information collected in the fitness appraisal of clients about current body composition using relevant body composition measures
9. Provide basic information about the relationship between diet and the management of body composition to clients
10. Describe briefly the role of the body's energy systems in the storage and utilisation of energy substrates for energy production
11. Refer clients requiring more extensive dietary information to a suitably qualified medical professional/ dietician

Support fitness clients with body image issues

12. Implement strategies to promote body satisfaction when providing information about exercise, fitness testing and healthy eating options
13. Provide information about healthy eating options that fosters a positive attitude towards food and eating
14. Recognise indicators of poor body image and discuss body satisfaction with clients
15. Show sensitivity to cultural and social differences

Provide information about the structure and function of the digestive system

16. Use knowledge of the structure and function of the digestive system when providing information to clients

Knowledge and Understanding

Exercise professionals should know and understand:

- K1 The relationship between healthy eating options and health and relevant guidelines for a balanced diet to enable the provision of accurate information to clients
- K2 Structure and function of the digestive system and the effect of healthy eating on other major body systems
- K3 Factors that influence fat loss response to exercise to enable effective goal setting
- K4 Appropriate protocols for advising clients on healthy eating
- K5 Own role and limitations in providing healthy eating information and situations requiring advice from or referral to medical or health professionals
- K6 Body composition measurement methods and the relationship between body composition, fat distribution and health to enable the development of realistic and achievable exercise and healthy eating plans aligned to client needs and targets
- K7 Guidelines for developing exercise plans to improve body composition
- K8 Body composition measures which may include:
 - weight,
 - height,
 - waist circumference,
 - hip circumference,
 - skin folds,
 - waist to hip ratio
- K9 Dietary trends which may include:
 - 'fad' or popular diets,
 - nutritional supplementation,
 - healthy eating ergogenic aids
- K10 Energy substrates including:
 - lipids,
 - carbohydrate,
 - protein,
 - alcohol
- K11 Energy systems including:
 - alactic,
 - lactic,
 - aerobic
- K12 General features of balanced healthy eating including:
 - energy balance,
 - recommended daily intake of nutrients,
 - fuel for exercise,
 - fuel for minimising post-exercise fatigue and maximising recovery,
 - hydration levels

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K13 General principles of healthy eating including:

- food groups,
- national dietary guidelines,
- carbohydrates,
- lipids,
- cholesterol,
- protein,
- minerals,
- vitamins,
- fluid and electrolytes,
- intake of nutrients,
- balanced diet,
- food labelling,
- food preparation,
- myths and fallacies,
- nutritional supplementation

K14 Management of body composition including:

- metabolism,
- balance between energy intake and energy expenditure,
- energy expenditure,
- energy intake

K15 Healthy eating or dietary concerns may include:

- anorexia,
- bulimia,
- overweight or obesity,
- nutritional deficiencies including iron,
- calcium,
- dehydration,
- diabetes

K16 The scope of practice for fitness professionals in providing healthy eating advice and how to remain within professional boundaries



G1. Promote health and safety in the fitness environment

This standard describes the competence required to promote and ensure health and safety when working as an exercise professional. It is vital to ensure the health and safety of clients, colleagues and the exercise professional themselves. Health and safety law and regulations will be different in each country around the world. The standard contains some of the key elements of ensuring health and safety in the fitness environment including assessing risk and dealing with incidents and emergencies.

Performance Criteria

Exercise professionals should be able to:

Maintain a healthy and safe fitness environment

1. Have access to relevant and up-to-date health and safety information to carry out all work tasks safely and responsibly
2. Ensure first aid equipment meets health and safety guidelines and is present and functional
3. Follow relevant health and safety requirements and procedures at all times
4. Check for, identify and minimise hazards in the fitness environment
5. Assess and control risks using organisational procedures
6. Identify and report unsafe work practices
7. Address safety issues within the limits of own role and responsibility
8. Pass on suggestions for improving health and safety to relevant colleagues

Respond to emergency situations

9. Deal with injuries and signs of illness according to organisational procedures
10. Employ emergency procedures when required
11. Call for a qualified first aider or the emergency services when required
12. Identify and follow relevant accident/ incident/ hazard reporting procedures

Knowledge and Understanding

Exercise professionals should know and understand:

- K1 Health and safety requirements in a fitness environment
- K2 The legal and regulatory requirements for health and safety relevant to working in a fitness environment
- K3 The key health and safety documents that are relevant in a fitness environment
- K4 How to control risks in a fitness environment
- K5 Organisational health and safety policies and procedures which may include:
- chemical handling,
 - duty of care,
 - emergency procedures,
 - first aid,
 - general maintenance,
 - hazard identification,
 - health and hygiene,
 - issue resolution,
 - manual handling,
 - occupational health and safety,
 - personal safety,
 - reporting procedures,
 - security,
 - stress management,
 - use of personal protective equipment,
 - waste disposal
- K6 Typical safety issues in the fitness environment which may include:
- environmental conditions,
 - slippery surfaces,
 - manual handling and lifting,
 - toxic substances,
 - industrial gases,
 - body fluids,
 - fire,
 - infectious waste,
 - sharps,
 - chemical spills,
 - dust and vapours,
 - noise, light and energy sources,
 - faulty electrical equipment,
 - faulty sport or activity-specific equipment,
 - vehicles
- K7 Methods of controlling risk in the fitness environment:
- dealing with the hazard personally,
 - reporting the hazard to the relevant colleague,
 - protecting others from harm

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- K8 Roles of designated personnel within the fitness environment which could include:
- supervisors,
 - managers,
 - team leaders
- K9 Definition of hazards and how they can be identified, isolated, eliminated or minimised
- K10 How to identify and deal safely with hazards
- K11 How to risk assess the types of possible hazards in a fitness environment
- K12 Why it is important to get advice from a relevant colleague if unsure about hazards and risks in the workplace
- K13 Manufacturers' guidelines and instructions for the use of facilities and equipment
- K14 Documents relating to health and safety that may have to be completed and how to complete them correctly
- K15 Why it is important to make suggestions about health and safety issues and how to do so
- K16 Legislative rights and responsibilities for workplace health and safety
- K17 The types of accidents, injuries and illnesses that may occur in the fitness environment
- K18 How to deal with accidents, injuries and illnesses before qualified assistance arrives
- K19 How to decide whether to contact the on-site first aider or immediately call the emergency services
- K20 The procedures to follow to contact the emergency services
- K21 Organisational reporting procedures for emergencies
- K22 Emergency procedures in a fitness environment
- K23 The roles that different staff and external services play during an emergency



H1. Provide customer service in health and fitness

This standard describes the competence required to provide good customer service in the health and fitness industry. The standard covers presentation, communication, customer service and dealing with complaints. Customer refers to the recipient of health and fitness services. Customer service refers to any action taken to meet customer needs and expectations in relation to provision of health and fitness services.

Performance Criteria

Exercise professionals should be able to:

Maintain personal presentation

1. Maintain organisational standards for personal presentation

Communicate with clients

2. Communicate with clients in a polite, professional and friendly manner
3. Use appropriate language and tone in both written and spoken communication
4. Develop a rapport with and provide empathy with clients
5. Provide information clearly to clients
6. Use appropriate non verbal communication skills
7. Listen to clients and ask questions to check understanding

Provide customer service to clients

8. Greet clients effectively
9. Identify client needs and expectations correctly and provide appropriate products, services or information
10. Ensure client satisfaction
11. Meet all reasonable client needs and requests
12. Identify and take all opportunities to enhance service quality
13. Engage with clients during exercise
14. Consult with a colleague or other professional where there is difficulty in meeting customer needs and expectations
15. Provide alternative customer service solutions if necessary
16. Show sensitivity to cultural and social differences

Respond to client complaints

17. Recognise client dissatisfaction promptly and take action to resolve the situation
18. Respond to client complaints positively, sensitively and politely and in consultation with the client
19. Handle client complaints effectively
20. Maintain a positive and cooperative manner at all times
21. Refer client complaints which cannot be resolved to other staff as appropriate

Knowledge and Understanding

Exercise professionals should know and understand:

Personal presentation

- K1 Standards of personal presentation that apply to the health and fitness industry and own organisation
- K2 The importance of presenting themselves and their organisation positively to clients

Communication

- K3 How to communicate effectively with a range of clients including different cultural groups

- K4 Appropriate language and the use of spoken, written and non-verbal communication
- K5 Characteristics, uses and conventions of different types of communication in the health and fitness industry

Customer service

- K6 Personal and interpersonal factors and their influence on customer service
- K7 How to identify client needs and expectations
- K8 How to find the correct information, products or services to meet client needs and expectations
- K9 How to form effective working relationships with clients
- K10 How to provide on-going customer service to clients
- K11 The importance of client care both for the client and the organisation
- K12 Why it is important to deal with clients' needs to their satisfaction
- K13 What types of issues may need to be referred to colleague or other professional, when to refer them and who this professional may be in different situations
- K14 Customer service techniques to meet client requirements and requests;
- K15 How to develop rapport and promote suitable products and services
- K16 Promotional products and services provided by the fitness industry and the specific organisation
- K17 How to engage with clients during exercise
- K18 How to link customer service to client motivation and exercise adherence
- K19 The importance of valuing equality and diversity when working with clients
- K20 Legal and ethical issues relating to exercise instructors and client relations
- K21 The importance of customer service to the development of the health and fitness industry and reaching out to non-traditional clients

Complaints

- K22 How to recognise client dissatisfaction
- K23 The importance of explaining any delay in dealing with clients and how to do so effectively
- K24 The importance of handling client complaints positively, sensitively and politely
- K25 The importance of remaining positive and cooperative at all times
- K26 Complaint handling policies and procedures that generally operate within the fitness industry and the specific organisation
- K27 How to refer a complaint to other staff as appropriate

11. Develop professional practice and personal career in the health and fitness industry

This standard describes the competence required for self-development and improvement for exercise professionals. This involves evaluating the exercise and physical activity they have planned and delivered, identifying strengths and weaknesses and learning lessons for the future. The standard also covers keeping up-to-date with developments in the health and fitness industry and taking part in continuing professional development to reinforce current competences and expand knowledge and skills in to new areas.

Performance Criteria

Exercise professionals should be able to:

Reflect on professional practice

1. Review the outcomes of working with clients, their feedback and feedback from colleagues or managers
2. Identify the effectiveness of their exercise instruction or programmes
3. Identify how effective and motivational relationships with clients have been
4. Identify how well instructing styles matched clients' needs
5. Identify effectiveness in managing clients' exercise, including their health, safety and welfare
6. Identify ways in which to improve future practice
7. Discuss ideas with other professionals and take account of their views
8. Evaluate performance against a code of conduct or code of ethical practice for instructors

Improve own development and career opportunities

9. Review professional practice on a regular basis
10. Keep up-to-date with developments in the health and fitness industry
11. Consider career goals
12. Develop a personal action plan to help to improve professional practice and career advancement
13. Take part in relevant development activities as part of personal action plan

Knowledge and Understanding

Exercise professionals should know and understand:

- K1 How to reflect on professional practice
- K2 The importance of reflection and continuing professional development in helping to develop client health, fitness and motivation
- K3 How to monitor the effectiveness of a training programme, exercise instruction, motivational relationships and instructional styles
- K4 The structure of the fitness industry
- K5 The role of the exercise professional in the industry
- K6 Industry organisations and their relevance to the fitness professional
- K7 Appropriate registration systems and continuing professional development requirements
- K8 Relevant code of conduct or code of ethical practice
- K9 Employment opportunities in different sectors of the industry
- K10 How to identify key lessons and how to make use of these in the future
- K11 The importance of discussing ideas with another professional
- K12 How to improve own professional practice and career opportunities
- K13 How to access information on developments in the fitness industry
- K14 How to identify areas where further development of professional practice is needed
- K15 The importance of having a personal action plan for development
- K16 The types of development activities that are available and how to access these
- K17 The importance of regularly reviewing and updating personal action plan

Gym Instructor Practical Assessment Guidance and Sample Assessment Checklist

Gym Instructor Practical Assessment Guidance

1. There must be evidence that the learner has carried out appropriate screening (e.g. use of the PARQ and informed consent) and taken physical measurements to include height, weight and a record of BMI.
2. There must be evidence that the learner has planned and instructed a safe and effective warm-up and cool-down.
3. There must be evidence that the learner has planned a gym-based programme by applying the principles and variables of fitness to a range of activities to meet identified client goals and/or to achieve general fitness and health gains.
4. There must be evidence that the learner has instructed clients to use a minimum of 3 of the following types of cardiovascular equipment:
 - Upright cycle
 - Recumbent cycle
 - Treadmill
 - Stepper
 - Rowing machine
 - Elliptical trainer
 - Cross trainer
5. Learners must show they have planned and instructed for a minimum of 3 body weight exercises and a minimum of 4 exercises from each of the following from the range shown within the table overleaf:
 - Resistance machine lifts
 - Free weight lifts

| Joint/ Movement | Resistance Machine | Free Weight | Body Weight |
|-------------------------------|---|---|----------------|
| Shoulder flexion | Seated chest press (neutral grip) | Front raise (DB) | |
| Shoulder extension | Seated row (low pulley) Seated row (neutral grip) | Single arm row Bent arm pullover (DB) | |
| Shoulder abduction | Shoulder press | Shoulder press (DB) Lateral raise (DB) Upright row (BB) | |
| Shoulder adduction | Lat pull down (in front of chest) Assisted pull up | | Chins |
| Shoulder | Bench press | Bench press | Press up |
| horizontal flexion | Seated chest press (BB grip) Pec dec | Flyes (DB) | |
| Shoulder horizontal extension | Seated row (BB grip) | Prone flye (DB) | |
| Elbow extension | Triceps pushdown (high pulley) Triceps press | Supine Triceps press (BB) Single arm Triceps press (DB) | Press up |
| Elbow flexion | Biceps curl (low pulley) Seated bicep curl | Biceps curl (BB) (DB) | |
| Hip extension | Leg press Total hip | Lunge (BB, DB optional) Dead lift (BB) (DB) | Lunge |
| Hip adduction | Seated adductor Total hip | | |
| Hip abduction | Seated abductor Total hip | | |
| Knee extension | Seated knee extension Leg press | Lunge Dead lift (BB) (DB) Squat (DB) (BB) | Lunge Squat |
| Knee flexion | Lying thigh curl Seated thigh curl | | |
| Trunk flexion | Abdominal machine | | Abdominal curl |
| Spinal Extension | Lower back machine | Dead lift (BB) (DB) | Back raise |

Gym Instructor Practical Assessment

Checklist 1

| The Learner | Warm Up | CV | RT | Cool Down | Overall Result |
|--|---------------------------|----|----|-------------|----------------|
| 1. Ensured appropriate equipment was in place. | | | | | |
| 2. Advised the client of safety considerations for gym based exercise equipment | | | | | |
| 3. Described planned exercises, including their physical and technical demands | | | | | |
| 4. Explained and demonstrated correct movements and techniques for performing gym based exercise to clients and explained their purpose and expected results | | | | | |
| 5. Used instructional techniques to teach the correct technique for gym based exercise | | | | | |
| 6. Encouraged feedback from the client to confirm their understanding of the exercises and to identify any difficulties | | | | | |
| 7. Provided feedback and instructing points which were timely, clear and motivational | | | | | |
| 8. Observed the client providing motivation and support to increase adherence | | | | | |
| 9. Adapted exercises with suitable progressions and regressions according to client needs | | | | | |
| 10. Applied spotting/passing the bar techniques to ensure safety and to enhance performance | | | | | |
| KEY: | | | | | |
| P: | PASS | | | | |
| P*: | PASS with feedback | | | | |
| R: | Refer | | | | |
| | | | | PASS | REFER |

Notes

Notes



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