



CIMSPA PROFESSIONAL STANDARD

Gym Instructor

(FULL STANDARD)

EDITION: V1.1

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CIMSPA PROFESSIONAL STANDARD: Gym Instructor

Contents

	Page
1. Overview.....	3
2. Scope of the Gym Instructor.....	4
3. CIMSPA membership eligibility	5
4. Summary of knowledge and skills	6
5. Product development guidance	8
6. Learning and development requirements (LDRs).....	10
7. Acknowledgements.....	24

ABOUT THIS STANDARD

This document is a CIMSPA professional standard (full version).

The full version of this standard is available to CIMSPA awarding organisation, skills development, higher education and further education partners.

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1. Overview

Professional standard: Gym Instructor

This professional standard outlines the role and scope of a Gym Instructor and the essential knowledge and skills that are needed to meet the sector minimum deployment standards. It also provides guidance for the development of educational products that will be endorsed by CIMSPA.

The Gym Instructor sits in the sport and physical activity sector as part of the exercise and fitness industry.

The agreed industry prerequisite to become a Gym Instructor is to have achieved a CIMSPA endorsed educational product that fully meets this professional standard. Individuals who achieve this will be deemed to have met this standard and will also be eligible for CIMSPA membership.

Endorsed qualification logo

Qualifications that meet the requirements of this CIMSPA professional standard will display this official CIMSPA endorsement logo.



2. Scope of the Gym Instructor

The role of the Gym Instructor is to engage, facilitate, educate and support clients in the gym environment.

- They play a key role in customer experience and member retention, motivating clients to adhere to exercise to support long-term, health-related behaviour change.
- The gym instructor uses their technical knowledge to conduct assessments, consultations and inductions, providing sound demonstrations of gym-based exercise and equipment.
- They know how to conduct pre-exercise screening and when individuals should be referred to other exercise or health professionals.
- They plan safe and effective gym-based exercise programmes, providing ongoing supervision, monitoring and programme review to ensure programmes remain engaging, varied and progressive to clients' needs and goals.
- They provide a positive customer experience by routinely 'walking the gym floor' to engage and build rapport with clients and to support safe and effective exercise technique.
- They have responsibility for health and safety and cleaning relevant to their role within the gym environment.
- The gym instructor works both independently and as part of a team.
- As a first point of contact, the gym instructor will provide high levels of customer care, service excellence and will assist with any customer feedback, taking responsibility for the customer experience.
- The gym instructor will typically cover a seven-day week that may include weekends, early mornings, evenings and public holidays and will report to the fitness/leisure manager.

3. CIMSPA membership eligibility

Graduates of this standard will meet the requirements to be a CIMSPA Affiliate member. They will:

UNDERSTAND

- How to work with a broad range of clients with different needs, in different types of environments, over a period of time sufficient enough to show lifestyle, health, and fitness improvements.

HAVE DEMONSTRATED

- Competence of working with one type of client, in a single environment (including in small groups) over a period of time sufficient enough to show lifestyle, health and fitness improvements.

Additional specialist standards (population, environment or technical) can be added to educational products to widen the scope of the role and enable an individual to show their expertise in additional populations, in different environments and with technical specialisms.

Examples of specialisms that may be added:

- Working with children.
- Exercise referral.
- Working with older adults.

Refer to the CIMSPA Professional Standards Matrix for a comprehensive overview as to how job roles relate to populations, environments and technical specialisms.

4. Summary of knowledge and skills

Gym Instructor

Topic	Knowledge	Skills
Maximise the customer experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The customer experience/journey within the fitness facility environment.• Customer expectations and aspirations within the fitness facility environment.• How to engage with customers and build rapport in order to maximise their experience.• How to support safe and enjoyable use of the fitness facility environment.• How to build social support and inclusion within the fitness environment.• How to obtain feedback to support membership retention.• The importance of 'walking the gym floor' and being accessible and approachable to clients.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to create positive first impressions and to develop rapport with customers through excellent communication skills.• Gain and act on feedback to enhance the customer experience.• Ability to communicate with clients about their progress, supporting them to realise their achievements and results.• Be approachable and accessible to clients at all times.
Routine maintenance and cleaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to undertake routine maintenance and cleaning tasks of the gym facility and its equipment.• How to monitor and maintain safe and high standards of hygiene in accordance with the facility's health and safety procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to organise own work and collaboratively work with colleagues to ensure that routine maintenance and cleaning tasks are undertaken in line with the facility's daily cleaning schedule whilst minimising the impact on the customer experience.
Exercise anatomy and physiology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anatomy and physiology including human movement/biomechanics, the cardiorespiratory, musculoskeletal, digestive, energy and nervous systems.• Life-course of the musculoskeletal system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply knowledge of anatomy and physiology in the planning and delivery of safe and effective exercise programmes for a range of clients.
Consultations, assessments and gym inductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to conduct an effective client consultation.• How to undertake safe and effective client screening to determine readiness to exercise or the need to signpost or refer clients to other relevant professionals.• How to select and conduct client assessments and reviews according to organisational procedures and the needs of the client.• How to induct individuals and small groups in the gym.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess client's readiness to exercise and the need for signposting or referral to other relevant professionals.• Conduct safe and effective consultations, assessments and reviews with clients.• Conduct individual and group inductions.• Provide a 'customer experience' during consultations, assessments and gym inductions.

Topic	Knowledge	Skills
Lifestyle management and client motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of factors that contribute to an individual's lifestyle such as nutrition, stress, fatigue, alcohol and levels of physical activity. • How to create a positive environment that motivates and empowers clients and promotes adherence to exercise to support goal achievement. • How physical activity helps in the management of common health conditions. • The process of behaviour change. • The role of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in exercise adherence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote wellness advice and utilise opportunities to educate clients about how modern lifestyles impact upon health and wellbeing. • Create a positive, motivating and empowering environment to support adherence to exercise and goal achievement.
Plan and review gym programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to plan safe and effective gym-based exercise programmes tailored to the needs of a range of clients within scope of practice. • Know the current recognised national/international guidelines for developing the components of fitness. • How to monitor and review safe and effective gym-based exercise programmes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan a safe and effective gym-based exercise programme for a range of clients, using appropriate equipment and methods. • Monitor and review the effectiveness of the exercise programme to ensure it is engaging, varied and progressive to clients' needs and goals, whilst following the principles of training.
Exercise supervision and technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitness training techniques including cardiovascular, resistance, functional, flexibility and mobility exercises. • How to supervise safe and effective exercise through observation of movement and technique. • How to demonstrate the correct and safe way to perform exercises. • How to adapt exercise based on client's fitness/individual needs and the FITT principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correctly demonstrate a range of cardiovascular, resistance, functional, flexibility and mobility exercises. • Supervise technique to ensure safety and effectiveness. • Provide feedback on performance and advise suitable adaptations/regressions/progressions/corrective strategies to ensure continued success.
Professional practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise good practice for gym instructors in the industry through professional ethics, values and appropriate legislation such as data protection and confidentiality, supporting the health, safety and welfare of clients and others at all times. • How to develop self by maintaining a high level of industry knowledge through regular relevant professional development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a high standard, client-focused service through excellence in the fitness environment and application of best practice such as injury prevention and risk management. • Demonstrate tact and discretion when handling client data, adhering to relevant legislation. • Work effectively alone and as part of a team with minimal supervision.

5. Product development guidance

This section is aimed at organisations developing educational products mapping to this professional standard. The requirements should be taken into account in the development of all educational products seeking CIMSPA endorsement.

The CIMSPA professional development board (PDB) has agreed that any of the following educational products can be developed for the role of Gym Instructor,

Educational product	Mapping requirements	Professional standard achieved on attainment?
Regulated vocational qualification	Fully mapped	YES
Apprenticeship programme	Fully mapped	YES
HE programme/modules	Fully mapped	YES

Where evidence that all elements of the professional standard are included CIMSPA endorsement can be sought.

All educational products must be submitted to CIMSPA for endorsement and should include all elements outlined in the professional standard.

Awarding organisations and higher institutions seeking CIMSPA endorsement for a product against this professional standard are asked to consider the following:

- a) They determine and justify the level of the product they have developed, in line with the regulator's guidance. To ensure parity, the level for all educational products that fully map to this professional standard be the same; the level assigned is determined by leading awarding organisations currently offering qualifications in the sector in which the role resides. This is not a first-to-post exercise but one in which awarding organisations/institutions are invited to submit their levelled units/full qualification for review as part of the CIMSPA endorsement process. Once agreed by CIMSPA, all subsequent fully-mapped educational products must conform to the level set for this professional standard.

Level descriptors set out the generic knowledge and skills associated with the typical holder of a qualification at a given level and it should be ensured that educational products fully mapping to this professional standard are a 'best-fit' for the level assigned.

- b) They determine the total qualification time for the qualification/unit and outline the minimum requirements for practical assessment. For the role of Gym Instructor sufficient time between engaging a client and final assessment needs to be allowed to show improvements in the client's lifestyle, health, and fitness. e.g. plan to cover a minimum six week programme of delivery with evaluation and modification.

They stipulate practical assessment must be conducted where practicably possible in a real world environment ideally, 'on the job'/at work.

Where practicably possible a practical end-point assessment is conducted with 'real clients'. The use of peers for an end-point practical assessment is not deemed appropriate.

- c) Their quality assurance meets the appropriate regulator's guidance. Including; internal and external quality assurance, staffing requirements and assessment generation and evidence.

6. Learning and Development Requirements (LDRs)

The LDRs outline the key areas of learning and assessment that should be contained within any educational product seeking CIMSPA endorsement for a professional standard. There are 8 key areas of learning and development for the job role of Gym Instructor, of which all areas are interconnected and mandatory. The key areas are:

1. Maximise the customer experience.
2. Routine maintenance and cleaning.
3. Exercise anatomy and physiology.
4. Consultations, assessments and gym inductions.
5. Lifestyle management and client motivation.
6. Plan and review gym programmes.
7. Exercise supervision and technique.
8. Professional practice.

N.B. Examples are given within the LDRs to provide an overview of the knowledge and skills most relevant to the role. It is not mandatory to assess learners against 100% of the examples provided, however, sufficient coverage to ensure occupational competence on achievement must be ensured. This will be reviewed as part of the CIMSPA endorsement process.

1. Maximise the customer experience

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Gym Instructor must:
K1.1	Customer needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand the local demographics of their organisation's customers and how this affects the products and services offer. Customer expectations and aspirations within the fitness facility environment. Know how to build social support and inclusion within the fitness facility environment. Know how to obtain feedback to support membership retention.
K1.2	Customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand their organisation's products and offer. Understand a typical customer journey in a fitness facility environment. Understand how to present themselves in a professional and approachable manner, in line with organisational standards. Understand the importance of customer retention and how to influence customer retention.
K1.3	Customer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand different methods to engage with customers: e.g. face-to-face, telephone, written (letters, email, posters), social media, digital technology. Know different types of conflict and how to manage them. Know different methods to build rapport in order to maximise the customer experience. How to support safe and enjoyable use of the fitness facility. The importance of 'walking the gym floor' and being accessible and approachable to clients.
K1.4	Customer communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand different communication techniques and how to use them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observation/non-verbal techniques/body language, open/closed questioning, active listening. How to adapt communication methods to meet the needs of customers from differing backgrounds, cultures, experience etc.
K1.5	Customer feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand different methods to obtain customer feedback and channels of recording and reporting in line with organisational procedures. Understand the feedback cycle and the impact of their role on the customer experience.
Ref	Skills:	A Gym Instructor must be able to:
S1.1	Customer data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpret customer data in order to understand the different types of customers and their needs.
S1.2	Customer engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate customer engagement e.g. deliver an informative tour, deal with customer enquiries, offer an end to end service.
S1.3	Customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate exemplary customer service to include: problem solving, discretion, influencing, teamwork, suitable language use, etc.
S1.4	Develop rapport with customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop rapport with customers in a friendly and approachable manner whilst respecting equality and diversity.

Ref	Skills:	A Gym Instructor must be able to:
S1.5	Professional demeanour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a professional demeanour e.g. uniform and personal attributes, positive first impressions.
S1.6	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate communication methods appropriate to the customer.

2. Routine maintenance and cleaning

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Gym Instructor must:
K2.1	Cleaning substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the principle uses and suitability of a range of cleaning substances relevant to the gym environment e.g. anti-bacterial spray.
K2.2	Cleaning equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the principle uses and suitability of a range of cleaning equipment e.g. mop, paper towels etc.
K2.3	Safe systems of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand standard operating procedures with regards to routine maintenance and cleaning, adhering to: manufacturer's guidelines, control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH), manual handling techniques, electrical safety and security and safe storage of equipment.
K2.4	Personal safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know personal protective equipment, risk assessments and emergency action plans.
K2.5	Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how to identify hazards relating to: activity areas and gym; people, physical risks. • Understand risk assessments and reporting procedures.
K2.6	Cleaning schedules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the cleaning routines and organisational standards relevant to the gym environment. • Know how to maintain the safety of themselves and others.
K2.7	Waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the different types of waste e.g. hazardous and non-hazardous and how to dispose of it, in line with the organisation's environmental policy.

Ref	Skills:	A Gym Instructor must be able to:
S2.1	Preparing to clean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and prepare own cleaning activities through the interpretation of the organisation's daily cleaning schedule.
S2.2	Cleaning activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate suitable use of appropriate cleaning substances and equipment in line with the organisations safe systems of work, cleaning schedules and organisational standards, whilst maintaining the safety of themselves and others.
S2.3	Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate appropriate action to deal with identified hazards to include appropriate use of signage and reporting procedures.
S2.4	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate effective communication to customers and colleagues whilst cleaning to ensure a positive customer experience.

3. Exercise anatomy and physiology

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Gym Instructor must:
K3.1	Structure and function of the circulatory system	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know the structure and function of the circulatory system:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Function of the heart.- How blood moves through the four chambers of the heart.- Systemic and pulmonary circulation.- Structure and functions of blood vessels.- Systolic and diastolic blood pressure.- Blood pressure classifications.
K3.2	Structure and function of the respiratory system	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know the structure and function of the respiratory system:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Structure and function 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 body (to cover internal and external respiration).
K3.3	Structure and function of the skeleton	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know the structure and function of the skeleton:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Functions of the skeleton.- Structures of the axial skeleton.- Structures of the appendicular skeleton.- Classification of bones.- Structure of long bones.- Stages of bone growth.- Posture, in terms of: curves of the spine, neutral spine alignment, movement potential of the spine and postural deviations of the spine.
K3.4	Joints	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know joints in the body:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Classification of joints.- Structure of synovial joints.- Types of synovial joints and their range of motion.- Joint movement potential and joint actions.
K3.5	Muscular system	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know the muscular system:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Types, characteristics and functions of muscle tissue.- Structure of skeletal muscle.- Name and location of the anterior skeletal muscles.- Name and location of the posterior skeletal muscles.- Structure and function of the pelvic floor muscles.- Types of muscle action.- Joint actions brought about by specific muscle group contractions.- Skeletal muscle fibre types and their characteristics.
K3.6	Life-course of the musculoskeletal system	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know the life-course of the musculoskeletal system, including bone to cover:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Young people (13-18)- Antenatal and postnatal period.- Older adults (50 plus)

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Gym Instructor must:
K3.7	Energy systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the different energy systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How carbohydrates, fats and proteins are used in the production of energy/adenosine triphosphate. – Use of the three energy systems during aerobic and anaerobic exercise: e.g. according to different type/duration/intensity of exercise. – Anabolism, catabolism and excess post-exercise oxygen consumption (EPOC). – By-products of the three energy systems and their significance in muscle fatigue. – Effect of endurance training/advanced training methods on the use of fuel for exercise.
K3.8	Nervous system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the nervous system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Role and functions of the nervous system. – Principles of muscle contraction. – The 'all or none' law/motor unit recruitment. – How exercise can enhance neuromuscular connections and improve motor fitness.
K3.9	Digestive system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the structure and function of the digestive system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Functions of each section of the alimentary canal (mouth, oesophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine). – How fats, proteins and carbohydrates are digested and absorbed and the main enzymes involved. – Role of dietary fibre in the maintenance of gut function. – Role of the liver and pancreas in assisting digestion. – Timescales for digestion. – Importance of fluid.
K3.10	Anatomical planes of movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the classification of anatomical planes of movement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Frontal, (coronal), sagittal and transverse.
K3.11	Anatomical terms of location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the classification of anatomical terms of location: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Superior and inferior, anterior and posterior, medial and lateral, proximal and distal, superficial and deep.
K3.12	Applied biomechanics and kinesiology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know the effect of exercise variables on biomechanics and kinesiology.

Ref	Skills:	A Gym Instructor must be able to:
S3.1	Application of exercise anatomy and physiology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply knowledge of anatomy and physiology in the planning of safe and effective exercise programmes for a range of clients. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Aerobic and anaerobic systems, muscle balance, heart rate response to exercise, long and short term physiological adaptations to exercise, energy demands of different activities, tailoring exercise to individual needs/goals etc.

4. Consultations, assessments and gym inductions

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Gym Instructor must:
K4.1	Client consultation process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the consultation process specific to gym-based exercise programme planning and own professional role boundaries:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– The significance of the consultation as part of the customer experience/customer journey.– Importance of educating client about own role, responsibilities and limitations in providing assistance (scope of practice).– The full range of activities/services/classes across the facility available to clients and how to provide further information about them.– Different demographics/fitness levels/goals of clients and how best to cater for their differing needs.– Relevance of data protection and client confidentiality.– Organisation's customer charter/service promise and the importance of striving to exceed it.– Related products, systems and technology (e.g. class booking apps) that help to enhance the customer experience.
K4.2	Health screening and risk stratification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know evidence-based pre-exercise health screening methods:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– PAR-Q, PAR-Q+, organisation/employer devised methods, health commitment statement– Informed consent.• Understand risk stratification models and when to signpost or refer a client to other specialist exercise professionals and/or medical professionals:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– How to risk stratify clients.– Clear understanding of the absolute contraindications to exercise and factors that indicate that a client is at low, medium or high risk of an adverse event occurring during exercise/propensity for risk.– Recognised tools (Irwin and Morgan traffic light system/other national/international evidence-based tools, national/locally agreed protocols/referral/care pathways.– Relevant health history, current health status, particularly in relation to risk factors for heart disease– The identification of medical conditions that would necessitate medical clearance or referral to an appropriate medical professional or other clinician or medically supervised exercise programme, past and present injuries and disabilities.• When to refer/signpost/take action and what action to take in each circumstance (low, medium, high risk).
K4.3	Client assessment and review process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Know a range of health and fitness assessments relevant to the gym based client:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Use of lifestyle questionnaires to gather relevant information: e.g. previous and current level of activity, exercise likes/dislikes.– Selecting assessments appropriate to the client and assessment conditions/expectations of the organisation.– Range of assessments relevant to the general population: resting heart rate, blood pressure, sub-maximal cardio-respiratory fitness and muscular strength, BMI, waist circumference, progress photographs if desired, contraindications and limitations for testing.• Know how to monitor and review client progress:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– The importance of building-in re-assessments/reviews to support client progress, motivation and adherence.– How to review a gym-based exercise programme in consultation with the client, based on results/goals/individual needs/changing circumstances.

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Gym Instructor must:
K4.4	Client induction process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how to induct clients in the gym environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Policies/procedures in and around the gym/facility relevant to own role. – Facility walk-through/show-round: e.g. gym floor, class/spin studios, CV machines, resistance equipment (machine and free weights). – How to adapt inductions for individuals and small groups (maximum of 5) to maintain effectiveness.

Ref	Skills:	A Gym Instructor must be able to:
S4.1	Conduct consultations, assessments and gym inductions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess a client's readiness to exercise and the need for signposting or referral to other relevant professionals. • Conduct safe and effective consultations, assessments, gym inductions and reviews with clients. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Adapt inductions for individuals and small groups (maximum of 5) to maintain effectiveness. • Provide a 'client experience' during consultations, assessments and gym inductions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Engage and build rapport with clients with varying needs. – Show empathy. – Give positive, motivating, timely and relevant feedback to clients. – Be accountable and take responsibility for clients. – use effective communication methods to ascertain a client's needs and enhance the customer experience. – signpost clients to other areas of the facility if they show an interest in other activities/services provided by the organisation.

5. Lifestyle management and client motivation

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Gym Instructor must:
K5.1	Lifestyle and health promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand components of a healthy lifestyle and factors that affect health and wellbeing. • Understand the UK physical activity guidelines for different ages and the dose-response relationship. • Know the nationally-recognised healthy eating recommendations. • Know how to seek evidence-based/reputable health and wellbeing advice. • Understand the benefits of physical activity/exercise to health and wellbeing. • Know how to tailor advice on the components of a healthy lifestyle according to the individual client. • Know how to communicate the health related benefits of exercise to clients. • Know how technological advancements can be used to support the customer experience to increase physical activity levels, motivation and focus: e.g. wearable technology, pedometers, smartphone apps.

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Gym Instructor must:
K5.2	Prevention and management of common health conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the prevalence and health implications of the UK population. • Know professional role and scope of practice in relation to other relevant specialists when offering health and wellbeing advice and guidance. • Know how physical activity/exercise can help to prevent and manage common health conditions: chronic conditions including coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, cancer, obesity, mental health problems and musculoskeletal conditions. • Know the range of relevant exercise or health professionals that clients can be signposted/referred onto when they are beyond own scope of practice/area of qualification.
K5.3	Behaviour change and exercise adherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the stages of change/trans-theoretical model of behaviour change. • Understand the role of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in exercise adherence. • Know a range of techniques/approaches that can motivate adherence to exercise.
Ref	Skills:	A Gym Instructor must be able to:
S5.1	Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a positive, motivating and empowering environment that supports clients to participate in and adhere to exercise. • Support the client to recognise and develop their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to exercise.
S5.2	Goal setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set SMART goals linked to a client's individual needs, wants and motivators. • Monitor targets, review and evaluate progress, adapt accordingly.
S5.3	Health promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer credible advice and guidance appropriate to own level of expertise to promote positive healthy lifestyle choices. • Be an ambassador for the sector leading by example and displaying positive health behaviours.

6. Plan and review gym programmes

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Gym Instructor must:
K6.1	Plan gym-based exercise programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand how to plan and tailor safe and effective gym-based exercise programmes for a range of clients within scope of practice:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– National recommended guidelines for physical activity and health for different ages: e.g. guidelines from the UK chief medical officer (CMO).– Credible information sources and research methods.– Importance of evidence-based practice.– Components of fitness (health and skill related).– Principles and variables of fitness/training (FITT principles (frequency, intensity, time and type), adaptation, modification and progression for each component of FITT, implications of specificity, progressive overload, reversibility, adaptability, individuality, recovery time).– Differences between programming exercise for physical fitness and for health benefits.– Safe and effective warm-up and cool-down.– Effect of speed of movement on posture, alignment and intensity.– Recognised national/international guidelines for developing the different components of fitness.– Different learning styles, goals, needs, likes/dislikes etc and how these should be reflected in planning.– Full range of available equipment and how to select the most appropriate exercise/exercise modes to meet the client's needs/goals.– Provision of alternative activities/exercises/participation options.– Provision of adaptations, progressions and regressions for each exercise included in the programme.– How to set and adapt meaningful SMART goals linked to a client's individual needs, wants and motivators.– Fixed weight/free weight/body weight resistance exercises that target the major muscles/muscle groups.– Importance of muscle balance when planning programmes.– How to programme exercise to develop cardiovascular fitness, muscular fitness, flexibility and functional skills/abilities.– How to minimise any risks relevant to the programme.– Realistic timings and sequences for sessions.
K6.2	Monitor and review gym-based exercise programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand how to monitor and review safe and effective gym-based exercise programmes:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Reasons for temporary deferral of exercise.– Importance of verbal screening and how to conduct it.– Benefits and limitations of different methods of monitoring exercise intensity (the talk test, rate of perceived exertion (RPE), heart rate monitoring and the use of different heart rate zones).– Methods of evaluating how well gym-based exercise programmes are meeting client needs.– When to proactively engage with clients and when not to: e.g. timing interactions appropriately/avoiding poorly timed interactions which can disrupt training/focus.

Ref	Skills:	A Gym Instructor must be able to:
S6.1	Plan gym-based exercise programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply knowledge to the planning of safe and effective gym-based exercise programmes for a range of clients within scope of practice, using appropriate equipment and methods.
S6.2	Monitor and review gym-based exercise programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and review the effectiveness of the gym-based exercise programme. • Carry out regular programme review meetings with clients to ascertain how well the exercise programme met client needs/progress towards goals, any improvements that can be made to the programme plan etc. • Signpost clients to other aspects of the facility if they show an interest in other areas/activities. • Evaluate and reflect on planned programmes to ensure the physical and psychological needs of the individual are being met. • Walk the gym floor demonstrating ability to effectively interact and support different clients: e.g. use of effective communication skills/rapport building/technique advice/correction, etc. • Appraise own performance in relation to the session. • Appraise participants' performance in relation to the session. • Assess the appropriateness of the session content in relation to the user group and environment. • Propose changes/adaptations to the session based on the appraisal of own performance, participant performance and appropriateness of session content.

7. Exercise supervision and technique

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Gym Instructor must:
K7.1	Gym-based exercise training methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know a range of gym-based exercise training methods to cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cardiovascular exercise: continuous, interval, fartlek. – Resistance exercise: single set training, circuit resistance training, basic sets, Delorme and Watkins 10 RM system, Berger 6 RM system, Super-sets. – Functional exercise and functional equipment: movement patterns, muscle actions and components of fitness required for activities of daily living. – Flexibility and range of motion exercise: static stretching and mobilisation of joints.

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Gym Instructor must:
K7.2	Gym-based exercise technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know safe and effective technique for a range of gym-based exercises to cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – CV machines – Bodyweight exercise – Machine weights: e.g. range of motion, rate, joint alignment etc). – Free weights: lifting, passing and spotting technique. – Small equipment: e.g. use of mats for core/abdominal exercise, etc. – Functional exercise and functional equipment (exercises that address the movement patterns/muscle actions/components of fitness required for activities of daily living). – Flexibility and range of motion exercise: static stretching and mobilisation of joints.
K7.3	Gym-based exercise demonstrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how to provide safe and effective exercise demonstrations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How to provide safe and effective demonstrations of a range of available equipment to cover: CV machines, machine and free weights, small equipment. – Effective coaching/teaching/instructing methods: to cater for different learning styles, tailoring instructing styles/communication methods to individual needs.
K7.4	Supervise gym-based exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how to observe and monitor gym clients to maintain safety and effectiveness of exercise at all times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How to approach clients in a friendly, non-threatening manner. – How to work with clients to effectively improve exercise technique. – How to adapt, regress, progress and apply corrective strategies as required. – How to modify and adapt exercises for a range of individual needs: offering alternatives that regress or progress an exercise. – Alternative activities/exercise options. – Awareness of health and safety considerations: e.g. manual handling. – Manufacturer guidelines, equipment maintenance and servicing. – Individual client abilities. – How wearable technology can be used to support safe and effective gym-based exercise. – How to adopt appropriate positions to observe clients and respond to their needs. – How to monitor the safety and intensity of exercise. – How to provide feedback and instructing points which are timely, clear and motivational.

Ref	Skills:	A Gym Instructor must be able to:
S7.1	Supervise gym-based exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe, monitor and engage with clients to ensure safety and effectiveness by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Utilising explanations and demonstrations that are technically correct, safe and appropriate to the individual client. – Observing clients' movement, correcting exercise technique to ensure safe and effective alignment, execution and use of equipment. – Providing client-specific instructing points, feedback, encouragement and reinforcement in a friendly, professional manner. – Offering adaptations and alternatives that meet a client's individual needs whilst improving performance: progression, regression, corrective strategies and alternative exercises as required. – Adopting appropriate positions to observe clients and respond to their needs. – Monitoring the safety and intensity of exercise. – Manipulating FITT principles to ensure progression according to individual needs.
S7.2	Gym-based exercise demonstrations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate safe and effective technique to cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Warm-up. – CV machines. – Bodyweight exercise. – Machine weights, e.g. range of motion, rate, joint alignment etc. – Free weights: lifting, passing and spotting technique). – Small equipment: e.g. use of mats for core/abdominal exercise, etc. – Functional exercise and functional equipment: exercises that address the movement patterns/muscle actions/components of fitness required for activities of daily living. – Flexibility and range of motion exercise: static stretching and mobilisation of joints. – Cool-down. • Demonstrate effective coaching/teaching/instructing methods: to cater for different learning styles, tailoring instructing styles/communication methods to individual needs. • Ensure clients understand how to continue their programme of gym-based exercise without direct supervision.

8. Professional practice

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Gym Instructor must:
K8.1	Conduct and ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how to conduct themselves and portray a professional image. • Know roles and responsibilities of self and others involved in the programme including the client and other staff/professionals. • Know relevant industry codes of professional conduct/ethics related to own role.

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Gym Instructor must:
K8.2	National guidelines, legislation and organisational procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know current national guidelines, legislation and organisational procedures relevant to own role: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Data protection, client confidentiality, conflict of interest – Health and safety at work, disclosure and barring service (DBS), safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, equality and diversity, personal liability insurance. – Control of substances hazardous to health, reporting of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences regulations, electricity at work regulations, first aid regulations. – Individual organisational policies and procedures in relation to own role and responsibilities, normal operating procedures (NOPs), organisation emergency action plans (EAPs), importance of risk assessment and how to conduct it. • Understand storage plans and how to create one. • Understand the health and safety implications of assembly, dismantling, hygiene and storage of equipment. • Know about manufacturer's guidelines and where to locate them. • Understand manual handling requirements in relation to own role. • Know how to carry out risk assessments.
K8.3	Professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how to keep knowledge and skills up to date: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Importance of accessing regular relevant CPD activities. – How to access relevant industry-recognised CPD. – Keeping up to date with industry trends. • Know how to work within the boundaries of own professional knowledge and competence based on qualifications and experience: e.g. to programme exercise for children and young people, it is necessary to possess a qualification mapping to the relevant CIMSPA professional standard(s). • Understand how to complete self-reflection/evaluation to aid personal development. • Know relevant legislation/policy and guidelines relating to CPD.
K8.4	Business acumen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know how to financially plan (profit and loss, tax, national insurance, liability insurance and music license fees etc). • Understand organisation's/own product offer and how to support secondary spends where appropriate. • Know the importance of digital media and how to develop a digital plan. • Understand social media/digital profiles and their impact. • Know how to set up a professional social media/digital profile.

Ref	Skills:	A Gym Instructor must be able to:
S8.1	Work alone and as part of a team with minimal supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the ability to work alone and as part of a team with minimal supervision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Communicate effectively with both clients and team members/colleagues – Demonstrate skills and abilities such as adaptability, confidence, team working, problem solving, conscientiousness, efficient time management, ability to plan and prepare own work, ability to identify areas for development, ability to follow instructions.
S8.2	Responsibility and professional duty of care to clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure client safety and wellbeing at all times: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Compliance with relevant legal and organisational responsibilities: e.g. health and safety at work, equality and diversity, safeguarding, data protection, hazard identification, safe working practices, ethics and professional conduct.

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