



**CIMSPA PROFESSIONAL STANDARD**

# Personal Trainer

(FULL STANDARD)

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# CIMSPA PROFESSIONAL STANDARD: Personal Trainer

## Contents

	Page
1. Overview.....	3
2. Scope of the Personal Trainer.....	3
3. CIMSPA membership eligibility .....	4
4. Summary of knowledge and skills .....	5
5. Product development guidance .....	8
6. Learning and development requirements .....	10
7. Acknowledgements.....	26

## 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: Personal Trainer

This professional standard outlines the role and scope of a Personal Trainer and the essential knowledge and skills that are needed to meet the requirements of Practitioner membership with CIMSPA (the sector minimum deployment standard).

This full version of this standard is available to CIMSPA awarding organisation, skills development, higher education and further education partners. It provides guidance for the development of educational products that will be endorsed by CIMSPA.

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

The agreed industry prerequisite to become a personal trainer is to have achieved a CIMSPA endorsed educational product that meets the requirements for Practitioner membership of CIMSPA.

Some employers may require individuals to have achieved the standards to become a member of CIMSPA as an Advanced Practitioner<sup>1</sup>. This can be achieved by meeting the requirements of a CIMSPA professional standard for a population and environment specialism.

## Endorsed qualification logo

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



# 2. Scope of the Personal Trainer

The role of a Personal Trainer is to coach clients (on a one-to-one and small group basis) towards their health and fitness goals through the planning and delivery of creative and personalised exercise programmes and instruction, nutritional advice and overall lifestyle management.

- Personal Trainers will analyse a client's needs, adapt and modify guidance to motivate clients to positively change their behaviour and improve their overall wellbeing by providing specialist, tailored advice within their scope of practice.
- They are aware of when to refer clients to relevant appropriate professionals for specialist information and guidance (e.g. physiotherapist, registered dietician, medical specialist).
- A comprehensive understanding of business, finance, sales and marketing is also essential to enable the personal trainer to build and retain a stable client base.
- Personal Trainers are employed by a fitness or leisure centre or, once qualified, can be self-employed and should expect to work hours that may include evenings, weekends and public holidays.

- This occupation exists within a sector that plays an important role in improving the health of the nation, creating opportunities that get more people, more active, more often.

### 3. CIMSPA membership eligibility

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

#### **UNDERSTAND**

- How to work with a broad range of clients with different needs, in different types of environment, 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 over a period of time sufficient enough to show lifestyle improvement.

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.
- Working in the school environment.
- 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

### Personal Trainer

Topic	Knowledge	Skills
<b>Anatomy, physiology and kinesiology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Human movement/biomechanics, anatomy and physiology including the cardiorespiratory, musculoskeletal, nervous and endocrine systems and the implications of long and short-term exercise on these systems.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ability to apply appropriate methods and techniques to facilitate clients' desired physiological goals.</li></ul>
<b>Lifestyle management and client motivation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The range of factors that contribute to an individual's lifestyle such as dietary intake, stress, fatigue, alcohol and levels of physical activity.</li><li>• How to assess clients' readiness to change their behaviour and how to apply a range of appropriate change strategies.</li><li>• How to create a positive environment that motivates and empowers clients, promotes adherence to a behaviour change programme and meets their desired goals.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assess clients' readiness to change behaviour and apply effective change strategies, communication techniques and motivation to facilitate healthy behaviours that move them towards their goals and promote programme adherence.</li><li>• Implement a range of theories relating to client motivation and behaviour change.</li></ul>
<b>Health and wellbeing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Common occurring medically controlled diseases and health conditions affecting the nation such as hypertension, obesity, coronary heart disease and diabetes and how these may impact on a client's lifestyle.</li><li>• The principles and processes which underpin the assessment of medical readiness to exercise, what conditions exercise can be prescribed for and what conditions would be more appropriately signposted to relevant appropriate professionals for specialist information and guidance.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify commonly occurring conditions and provide information, advice and support to clients where required.</li><li>• Promote wellness advice and demonstrate an understanding of how modern lifestyles impact upon the health and wellbeing of the client, providing signposting to appropriate professionals where relevant.</li></ul>
<b>Exercise programme design and delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to select and administer appropriate lifestyle assessments such as measurements of blood pressure, resting heart rate, strength, flexibility and aerobic endurance to gain the information required to develop an effective and personalised exercise programme.</li><li>• How to undertake client screening effectively and know the principles behind the design of an exercise programme, taking into account medically controlled diseases and health conditions that may need special consideration or referral when determining the programme's appropriateness.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Design, tailor and coach an effective exercise programme, using appropriate equipment. Continuously 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 and exercise science.</li><li>• Develop and deliver exercise sessions in environments other than the gym to individuals and small groups. Review and evaluate the effectiveness of these exercise programmes and amend accordingly.</li></ul>

Topic	Knowledge	Skills
<b>Exercise technique</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current and advanced fitness training techniques including cardiovascular, resistance and functional exercise.</li> <li>• How to observe a client's movement, identify incorrect technique and demonstrate the correct and safe way to perform exercises.</li> <li>• How to adapt exercise technique based on clients' fitness and conditioning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correctly demonstrate a wide range of exercise techniques, carry out reviews and advise clients on their performance and apply suitable adaptations for those at different levels of fitness.</li> <li>• Analyse clients' performance and apply suitable adaptations, regressions, progressions and corrective strategies to ensure continued success.</li> </ul>
<b>Nutrition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The principles of nutrition including current government guidelines, as well as evidence-based recommendations for nutritional strategies for a range of fitness goals such as weight management, fat loss, hypertrophy, and sports performance.</li> <li>• The importance of a nutritionally balanced diet as part of a healthy lifestyle and how to encourage clients to make good food choices, educating them where possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyse clients' dietary habits and identify areas for improvement.</li> <li>• Apply nutritional principles when developing exercise and lifestyle programmes for clients.</li> </ul>
<b>Information technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to use IT systems to support effective business planning and delivery.</li> <li>• How to monitor and interpret data.</li> <li>• How to use a variety of available systems to support, enhance and manage the assessment, analysis and implementation of clients' exercise programmes.</li> <li>• How technological advancements such as pedometers, heart rate monitors, video games and mobile phone applications, can help clients increase their activity levels, stay motivated and focused.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the use of appropriate IT systems to support and manage all aspects of a personal training business such as su keeping, sales and invoicing, client and group management, class scheduling, retention levels and session reminders.</li> <li>• Manage the effectiveness of a client's exercise programme through the use of appropriate available systems.</li> <li>• Use appropriate products to support and manage clients effectively.</li> <li>• Present, analyse and interpret data and information in line with professional practice.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise good practice for personal trainers 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.</li> <li>• How to develop self by maintaining a high level of industry knowledge through regular related professional development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Demonstrate tact and discretion when handling client data, adhering to relevant legislation.</li> </ul>

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Skills</b>
<b>Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of techniques to effectively communicate and engage with clients.</li> <li>• The importance of communication skills and the different strategies that can be used to adapt own communication style to suit client's personality and needs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to effectively communicate with clients using a range of techniques.</li> <li>• Be able to interpret and evaluate communication and adapt own communication styles in order to encourage and motivate clients to achieve their goals.</li> </ul>
<b>Business acumen</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A variety of effective marketing strategies, the importance of conducting research and the key factors that influence a marketing plan.</li> <li>• The principles of business planning and how to grow and develop a personal training client base in order to successfully achieve individual and organisational goals.</li> <li>• How to create, maintain, monitor and interpret financial data, and promote activities which support business objectives and growth.</li> </ul>	

## 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 Personal Trainer:

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 of 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 and assessed in line with the intention of the standard.***

Awarding organisations and higher education 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 should 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/higher education 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 personal trainer 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. to show behaviour change a plan to cover a 12-week period of delivery with a minimum of assessed evidence of six sessions of 30 minutes duration is advised.

They stipulate practical assessment must be conducted where practicably possible in a real-world environment ideally, 'on the job'/at work. For the role of personal trainer this could include; a gym, studio, sports hall, outdoors, client's home or other confined space.

Where practicably possible a practical end-point assessment should be 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 against a professional standard. There are 10 key areas of learning and development for the job role of Personal Trainer, of which all areas are interconnected and mandatory. The key areas are:

1. Anatomy, physiology and kinesiology.
2. Lifestyle management and client motivation.
3. Health and wellbeing.
4. Exercise programme design and delivery.
5. Exercise technique.
6. Nutrition.
7. Information technology.
8. Professional practice.
9. Communication.
10. Business acumen.

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. Anatomy, physiology and kinesiology

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Personal Trainer must:
K1.1	Bones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand the classification and structure of bones:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Long, short, flat, sesamoid, irregular.</li><li>- Compact and spongy/cancellous tissue, articular cartilage, epiphysis, diaphysis, periosteum, epiphyseal plates, bone marrow, the vertebral column (cervical, thoracic, lumbar, sacral and coccygeal), stages of bone growth, remodelling process, ageing process, osteoblasts and osteoclasts.</li></ul></li><li>• Understand the function of bones:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Muscle attachments and levers</li><li>- Protection of internal organs</li><li>- Red and white blood cell production</li><li>- Stages of bone growth - remodelling process, ageing process</li><li>- The role of osteoblasts, osteoclasts, hormonal contribution, body weight, calcium and vitamin D in bone density.</li></ul></li><li>• Understand the effects of exercise on bones:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Weight bearing and non-weight-bearing exercise.</li><li>- Acute and chronic effects.</li><li>- Stabilisation of the body.</li><li>- Neutral spine alignment.</li><li>- Potential ranges of movement of the spine.</li><li>- Transmission of stress caused by impact, body weight, bone density.</li></ul></li></ul>
K1.2	Joints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand the classification and structure of joints:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Fibrous, cartilaginous, synovial.</li><li>- Joint capsule, synovial membrane, synovial fluid, ligaments, tendons and cartilage (hyaline and fibrocartilage), curves/regions of the spine.</li></ul></li><li>• Understand the function of joints:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Joint movement terminology: flexion and extension, adduction and abduction, circumduction, supination and pronation, plantar flexion and dorsiflexion, lateral flexion and extension, horizontal flexion and extension, elevation and depression, inversion and eversion, tensile strength of ligaments.</li><li>- Planes of motion: transverse, frontal and sagittal.</li><li>- Joint stability, passive and active structures, shock absorption: e.g. natural curves of the spine.</li></ul></li><li>• Understand the effects of exercise on joints:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Effect of muscle contractions and movements: e.g. posture, impact, body weight.</li><li>- Active stability of joints: key joints at risk (spine, shoulder joint).</li><li>- Risks: lack of biomechanical efficiency, reduction in transmission of stress, increased risk of injury, increased loading placed on synergists.</li></ul></li></ul>

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Personal Trainer must:
K1.3	Muscles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the classification and structure of muscles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cardiac, smooth, skeletal.</li> <li>- Connective tissue (epimysium, perimysium, endomysium).</li> <li>- Muscle fibres - slow twitch type I (slow oxidative), fast twitch (type 2a: fast oxidative glycolytic and type 2b: fast glycolytic).</li> <li>- Muscles and muscle attachment sites (origins and insertions), to cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rotator cuff: SITS (S: supraspinatus I: infraspinatus T: teres minor S: subscapularis).</li> <li>○ Shoulder girdle: levator scapulae, pectoralis minor, serratus anterior, trapezius, rhomboids major/minor, teres major.</li> <li>○ Spinal extensors: erector spinae, iliocostalis, longissimus, spinalis, multifidus, quadratus lumborum.</li> <li>○ Hip flexors (iliopsoas): iliacus, psoas major.</li> <li>○ Adductors: magnus, brevis, longus, pectineus, gracilis, sartorius.</li> <li>○ Abductors: gluteus medius, gluteus minimus, piriformis, tensor fascia latae.</li> <li>○ Abdominals: internal and external obliques, transversus abdominus.</li> <li>○ Intercostals: diaphragm.</li> <li>○ 'Core' and pelvic floor muscles.</li> <li>○ Local/deep, global/superficial muscles.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand the function of muscles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Muscle actions: to cover muscles listed above.</li> <li>- Roles of major muscles: prime mover (agonist), antagonist, synergist, fixators.</li> <li>- Muscle contractions: concentric and eccentric (isotonic), isometric and isokinetic.</li> <li>- The principles of muscle contraction: e.g. all or none law, sliding filament theory, stretch reflex and reverse stretch reflex, size principle of motor unit recruitment.</li> <li>- Biomechanics: 1st, 2nd and 3rd class levers.</li> <li>- 'Core' and pelvic floor.</li> <li>- Local/deep; global/superficial.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand the effects of exercise on muscles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Short and long-term effects, delayed onset of muscles soreness (DOMS), muscle fatigue.</li> <li>- Response to overuse, underuse, misuse: e.g. shortening/weakening, altered roles/synergists becoming prime movers etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Knowledge and understanding:</b>	<b>A Personal Trainer must:</b>
<b>K1.4</b>	Biological systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the classification and structure of biological systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Muscular and skeletal.</li> <li>– Cardiovascular: heart (e.g. atria and ventricles), arteries, arterioles, veins, venules and capillaries.</li> <li>– Respiratory; lungs, pharynx, larynx, trachea, bronchi, bronchioles, alveoli.</li> <li>– Nervous: central nervous system and peripheral nervous system, neurons, motor units, proprioceptors (muscle spindles and Golgi tendon organs).</li> <li>– Endocrine: hormones and glands.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand the function of biological systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Cardiovascular: cardiac cycle, stroke volume, cardiac output, blood pressure (systolic and diastolic).</li> <li>– Respiratory: mechanism of breathing, gaseous exchange.</li> <li>– Nervous: sensory input, interpretation, motor output.</li> <li>– Endocrine: secretion of hormones.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand the effects of exercise on biological systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Cardiorespiratory: short and long-term effects on blood pressure, aerobic respiration, venous return, the implications of blood pooling.</li> <li>– Nervous: motor unit recruitment, inter and intramuscular coordination, neuromuscular coordination.</li> <li>– Endocrine: hormonal responses.</li> <li>– Signs and symptoms of overtraining.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>K1.5</b>	Energy systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the classification of energy systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Aerobic, anaerobic (lactate and creatine phosphate).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand the function of energy systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– How the energy systems function independently and how they interact with one another.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand the effects of exercise on energy systems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– ATP re-synthesis, aerobic and anaerobic threshold, effects of different training methods/systems.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>K1.6</b>	Anatomical planes of movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the classification of anatomical planes of movement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Frontal (coronal), sagittal and transverse.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>K1.7</b>	Anatomical terms of location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the classification of anatomical terms of location: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Superior and inferior, Anterior and posterior, Medial and lateral, Proximal and distal, Superficial and deep.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>K1.8</b>	Applied biomechanics and kinesiology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the effect of exercise variables on biomechanics and kinesiology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Levers, gravity/centre of gravity, momentum, force, planes of motion, length-tension relationships, open and closed chain kinetic movements with examples of each and a consideration of their advantages and disadvantages.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>K1.9</b>	Posture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the effect of exercise on posture: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Core stabilisation exercises, impact on posture, potential for injury/aggravation of problems.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand abnormal degrees of curvature of the spine and their implications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Medical conditions associated with dysfunctional stabilisation, such as common spinal disorders.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Ref	Skills:	A Personal Trainer must be able to:
S1.1	Supporting achievement of clients' physiological goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply appropriate methods and techniques to facilitate clients' desired physiological goals.</li> </ul>

## 2. Lifestyle management and client motivation

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Personal Trainer must:
K2.1	Lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand components of a healthy lifestyle and factors that affect health and wellbeing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Smoking, alcohol, nutrition, physical activity levels and preferences, weight management, rest and relaxation, relaxation training, stress (signs, symptoms, effects and management), work patterns/job, relevant personal circumstances, posture.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand how to educate clients on the components of a healthy lifestyle: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As listed above.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
K2.2	Psychological factors influencing behaviour change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand psychological factors that can influence change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, social support and peer pressure.</li> <li>- Individual client needs and differences: e.g. experienced, inexperienced, active and inactive.</li> <li>- Motives and barriers to change: perceived and actual, self-recognition of own barriers, reinforcement.</li> <li>- Self-efficacy.</li> <li>- Relevance/use of psychological questionnaires.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
K2.3	Strategies to encourage long term adherence to positive lifestyle practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand a range of theories/approaches that can motivate positive behaviour change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Motivational theories/approaches: e.g. arousal theories, stages of change /transtheoretical model, motivational interviewing.</li> <li>- How to identify a client's readiness to change/characteristics of an individual at each stage of change.</li> <li>- Appropriate interventions/strategies to use at each stage: e.g. decisional balance sheet/pros and cons/cost benefit analysis, fitness testing, overcoming barriers, goal setting, behavioural modification techniques, planning for relapse/contingency planning, rewards, focusing, support systems, reinforcement strategies and self-monitoring.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Skills:</b>	<b>A Personal Trainer must be able to:</b>
<b>S2.1</b>	Assess client's readiness to change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use strategies to identify client's readiness to change their behaviour/their 'stage of change'.</li> </ul>
<b>S2.2</b>	Create a positive, motivating and empowering environment to support adherence to exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify own role, the client's role and responsibilities and those of any other staff/professionals involved in the programme.</li> <li>• Use evidence-based strategies and techniques to create a positive, motivating and empowering environment that supports clients to participate in exercise.</li> <li>• Integrate appropriate motivational strategies to encourage long term adherence to exercise and other positive lifestyle practices.</li> <li>• Recognise personal barriers to exercise and use strategies to overcome them.</li> </ul>
<b>S2.3</b>	Goal setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set SMART goals linked to a client's individual needs, wants and motivators.</li> <li>• Monitor targets, review and evaluate progress, adapt accordingly.</li> </ul>
<b>S2.4</b>	On-going client support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use strategies to maintain contact and motivate clients between sessions: e.g. phone calls, emails, social media etc.</li> </ul>

### 3. Health and wellbeing

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Knowledge and understanding:</b>	<b>A Personal Trainer must:</b>
<b>K3.1</b>	Health conditions and medically controlled diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand a range of health conditions and medically controlled diseases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Common conditions and diseases: e.g. obesity, osteoporosis, mental health problems (stress/depression/anxiety), back pain, hypertension, angina, coronary heart disease (CHD), pre-diabetes and diabetes, prevalent forms of arthritis, stroke, cancer, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), chronic fatigue, eating disorders.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>K3.2</b>	Health screening and risk stratification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know evidence-based pre-exercise health screening methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– e.g. PAR-Q, PAR-Q+, organisation/employer devised methods.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand risk stratification models and when to signpost or refer clients to other specialist exercise professionals and/or medical professionals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 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.</li> <li>– Recognised tools: e.g. Irwin and Morgan traffic light system, ACSM categories, national/locally agreed protocols/referral pathways (where/when they exist).</li> <li>– 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.</li> <li>– Gaining informed consent.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Knowledge and understanding:</b>	<b>A Personal Trainer must:</b>
<b>K3.3</b>	Health promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how to seek evidence-based/reputable health and wellbeing advice:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organisations and websites where information can be sought/clients can be signposted to e.g. NHS Choices, British Heart Foundation, SSHES Active, Change 4 Life Department of Health Campaign, Diabetes UK etc.</li> <li>- UK Chief Medical Officer national recommended guidelines for physical activity and health.</li> <li>- Evidence-based health benefits of physical activity.</li> <li>- Dose-response relationship.</li> <li>- How to research unfamiliar medical conditions in relation to exercise participation/advice.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand professional role and scope of practice in relation to other relevant specialists when offering health and wellbeing advice and guidance:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- e.g. roles and scope of practice of personal trainers, doctors, physiologists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, strength and conditioning coach, dietitian/nutritionists, exercise referral instructors etc.</li> <li>- Liaising with other professionals regarding unfamiliar medical conditions.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Skills:</b>	<b>A Personal Trainer must be able to:</b>
<b>S3.1</b>	Health screening and risk stratification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use recognised pre-exercise health screening and risk stratification methods to assess a client's readiness to exercise and potential need to signpost or refer to other specialist exercise professionals and/or medical professionals.</li> </ul>
<b>S3.2</b>	Health promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer advice and guidance within scope of practice to promote positive healthy lifestyle choices.</li> </ul>



## 4. Exercise programme design and delivery

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Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Personal Trainer must:
K4.1	Consultations, assessments and reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand the consultation process:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- How to conduct a 1:1 consultation.</li><li>- Use of lifestyle questionnaires to gather relevant information: e.g. previous and current level of activity, exercise likes/dislikes etc.</li></ul></li><li>• Understand how to select and implement client assessments:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Selecting assessments appropriate to the client and assessment conditions: to cover with/without equipment, individual versus group assessment, factors affecting assessment validity, reliability and objectivity.</li><li>- Range of assessments: e.g. resting heart rate and blood pressure, cardio-respiratory fitness, muscular strength, muscular endurance, flexibility, body composition, contraindications and limitations for testing.</li><li>- Postural assessment to include static and dynamic postural analysis, optimal postural alignment, postural deficiencies/deviations.</li></ul></li><li>• Understand how to monitor and review client progress:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- The use of regular assessments to monitor client progress towards goal achievement.</li><li>- How to revise an exercise programme in consultation with a client based on results/goals/individual needs/changing circumstances.</li></ul></li></ul>
K4.2	Goal setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand how to set and adapt meaningful SMART goals linked to a client's individual needs, wants and motivators.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- How to set goals with clients.</li><li>- How to evaluate client progress through the monitoring and review of agreed goals.</li><li>- How to adapt goals according to progress and individual circumstances.</li></ul></li></ul>

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Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Personal Trainer must:
K4.3	Designing and tailoring exercise programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how to design and tailor exercise programmes for a range of clients within scope of practice:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Including: sedentary, recovering from injury, over-trained, high-level performer, sport specific performer, clients with low-risk health conditions, etc.</li> <li>- How to apply the principles of training to exercise programme design to develop, cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength (hypertrophy and endurance), flexibility, body composition, posture and core stability, motor skills.</li> <li>- The advantages and disadvantages of exercising at various intensities for: sedentary (untrained) experienced (trained), high-level performers (well trained).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Know a range of different protocols and tools:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Calculations of repetition maximums (1RM – 10RM).</li> <li>- Methods of monitoring exercise intensity to include: maximum heart rate formula, rate of perceived exertion (RPE) scales, both 6-20 and 1-10, metabolic equivalents (METs), kilocalories per hour (Kcal.hr), visual assessment and verbal assessment (talk test).</li> <li>- The repetition ranges for strength, power, endurance and muscle hypertrophy.</li> <li>- Heart rate training zone models for developing aerobic and anaerobic capacity.</li> <li>- The current ACSM or other recognised International guidelines for developing the different components of fitness.</li> <li>- Relevant guidelines for hands-on-contact with clients (with reference to relevant code of ethics/health and safety guidelines)</li> <li>- The reasons for using periodisation or progressive programming and the principles behind them.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
K4.4	Variables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the variables of training and how to tailor exercise programmes to support goal achievement:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How to manipulate the FITT principle to tailor exercise programmes: e.g. choice of exercises, sequence of exercise, resistance and repetitions, number of sets, rest between sets (recovery), speed of movement, type of muscle contraction, duration of session, rest between sessions, volume of training, split routines, development of aerobic and anaerobic CV fitness, strength, endurance, hypertrophy, speed and power etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
K4.5	Principles of training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the principles of training and how they relate to exercise programme design:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Including specificity, progressive overload, reversibility, adaptability, individuality and recovery time and how they relate to individual wants, goals and needs.</li> <li>- The importance of adequate rest phases between training loads and the signs and symptoms of overtraining.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
K4.6	Exercise modes and training environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how to design and deliver different modes of exercise in different environments:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Different environments: e.g. gym-based, studio-based, sports hall, outdoors, home-based or confined space.</li> <li>- Exercise modes: e.g. resistance training (machines, free-weights, body-weight), CV training, circuit training, body conditioning, core exercise, flexibility training etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
K4.7	Small group training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how to design sessions that can be delivered to small groups ensuring the safety of all clients at all times:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How to design effective small group PT sessions.</li> <li>- How to balance the needs of the individual and the group.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Skills:</b>	<b>A Personal Trainer must be able to:</b>
<b>S4.1</b>	Collect and analyse information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect the information required to design, tailor and coach an effective exercise programme.</li> <li>• Obtain informed consent.</li> <li>• Conduct pre-exercise assessment screening to assess if client onward referral is advised and where necessary refer the client to a more appropriate professional.</li> <li>• Seek and receive information from other relevant professionals concerning the client where indicated.</li> </ul>
<b>S4.2</b>	Conduct assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate client on purpose and value of pre-exercise assessments.</li> <li>• Select assessments appropriate to the individual client.</li> <li>• Select assessments appropriate to the assessment conditions/equipment/time available.</li> <li>• Advise client of correct procedures, protocols and risks prior to commencing any physical assessment(s).</li> <li>• Supervise client physical assessment in a safe and effective manner.</li> <li>• Conduct basic postural analysis on client.</li> <li>• Interpret results/recorded data using accepted criteria.</li> <li>• Inform client of analysis outcomes and discuss and agree actions/goals (using language/terms understood by client/simplify technical information, effective use of communication and interpersonal skills).</li> <li>• Develop a summary profile of client to assist in the design of a safe and effective programme tailored to their specific needs.</li> <li>• Undertake regular assessments/re-assessments to monitor client progress and achievement of goals.</li> </ul>
<b>S4.3</b>	Programme/session planning and delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan timings and sequences for the session.</li> <li>• Incorporate teaching strategies to enhance client performance.</li> <li>• Determine and vary modality and intensity of exercise.</li> <li>• Allocate equipment/resources required.</li> <li>• Link session to client goals (short/medium/long-term goals).</li> <li>• Incorporate warm-up and cool down activities appropriate to the session/individual.</li> <li>• Plan sessions in different environments to cover: gym, studio/sports hall, outdoors, client's home or other confined space.</li> <li>• Plan sessions for both individuals and small groups.</li> <li>• Deliver sessions in different environments: e.g. gym, studio/sports hall, outdoors, client's home or other confined space.</li> <li>• Deliver sessions for both individuals and small groups.</li> </ul>

Ref	Skills:	A Personal Trainer must be able to:
S4.4	Review programme/sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate the session against: session aims, SMART goals, activities, participant performance, own performance (preparation, delivery) and health and safety.</li> <li>• Review client goals based on outcomes and revise programme accordingly.</li> <li>• Amend and improve future session plans and own performance based on evaluation and feedback from the client: e.g. according to chosen activities, exercise intensity, changes in circumstances etc.</li> <li>• Give feedback to client based on review (timely, positive, relevant to goals etc).</li> </ul>
S4.5	Application of exercise science to programme design and delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence the application of knowledge of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The musculoskeletal system to programme design: e.g. musculoskeletal structure, muscle physiology, postural abnormalities, physiological adaptations to exercise, measuring exercise response, exercise risks.</li> <li>– Biomechanical concepts to programme design: e.g. resistance training equipment, exercise intensity, exercise safety and contraindications.</li> <li>– Physiological concepts to programme design: e.g. nervous and endocrine system, overtraining, effects of various environmental conditions on exercise response, effects of various individual factors on exercise response, dose-response relationship.</li> <li>– Cardio-respiratory system and energy systems to programme design: e.g. structure and function of the cardiorespiratory system, cardiac cycle, transport and gaseous exchange, aerobic and anaerobic systems, heart rate response to exercise, oxygen demands of different activities, physiological adaptations to exercise.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## 5. Exercise technique

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Personal Trainer must:
K5.1	Fitness training techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand a range of fitness training techniques:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cardiovascular exercise: e.g. steady state, interval, fartlek.</li> <li>- Resistance exercise: e.g. a range of training systems, exercise equipment, fixed and free weights.</li> <li>- Functional exercise: e.g. movement patterns, muscle actions and components of fitness which mirror a client's functional requirements.</li> <li>- Flexibility exercise, including: static, ballistic, dynamic and proprioceptive neuromuscular techniques (including the myotactic/stretch reflex) to facilitate increased range of motion.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
K5.2	Observe and adapt exercise technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how to observe and monitor clients during sessions to maintain safety and effectiveness of exercise:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How to identify poor/incorrect exercise technique.</li> <li>- How to adapt, regress, progress and apply corrective strategies as required.</li> <li>- Signs and symptoms that indicate an unplanned change in intensity: e.g. excessive/insufficient effort.</li> <li>- How to modify and adapt exercises for a range of individual needs: e.g. offer alternatives that regress or progress an exercise.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Ref	Skills:	A Personal Trainer must be able to:
S5.1	Fitness training techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilise appropriate teaching methods and skills to instruct:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cardiovascular exercise: e.g. steady state, interval, fartlek.</li> <li>- Resistance exercise: e.g. a range of training systems, exercise equipment, fixed and free weight).</li> <li>- Functional exercise: e.g. movement patterns, muscle actions and components of fitness which mirror a client's functional requirements.</li> <li>- Flexibility exercise: including static, ballistic, dynamic and proprioceptive neuromuscular techniques (including the myotactic/stretch reflex) to facilitate increased range of motion.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
S5.2	Observe and adapt exercise technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observe and monitor clients during the session to ensure safety and effectiveness by:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Utilising explanations and demonstrations that are technically correct, safe and appropriate to the individual client.</li> <li>- Correcting exercise technique to ensure safe and effective alignment, execution and use of equipment.</li> <li>- Providing client specific instructing points, feedback, encouragement and reinforcement.</li> <li>- Offering adaptations and alternatives that meet a client's individual needs and circumstances (progression, regression, corrective strategies and alternative exercises as required).</li> <li>- Modify and adapt exercises, sessions and programmes for a range of individual needs.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## 6. Nutrition

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Personal Trainer must:
K6.1	Principles of nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know the main nutrients and their food sources:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Food sources of carbohydrate, fats (saturated, un-saturated, essential fatty acids), protein, vitamins, minerals, water.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand the importance of hydration, macro-nutrients and micro-nutrients and their functions.</li> <li>• Understand the influence of nutrition on health:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– e.g. obesity, cholesterol, omega 3 and 6 ratio, cancer risk etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
K6.2	Nutritional strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand current government healthy eating guidelines and evidence-based recommendations and how they can be applied to individual clients to cover:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Weight management and health</li> <li>– Hypertrophy</li> <li>– Sports performance</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Understand how to educate and encourage clients to make good food choices:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Refer to 'Lifestyle management and client motivation' and 'Communication' section for range guidance.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
K6.3	Nutritional assessment tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how to incorporate the use of nutritional assessment tools:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– e.g. food diary, food recall and food frequency questionnaires, body composition assessment etc).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
K6.4	Human metabolism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know methods to estimate resting metabolic rate and energy requirements to support the achievement of client goals.</li> </ul>
Ref	Skills:	A Personal Trainer must be able to:
S6.1	Assessment of nutritional intake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use appropriate nutritional assessment tools to identify client's dietary habits.</li> <li>• Analyse client's dietary habits and identify areas for improvement within scope of practice.</li> </ul>
S6.2	Application of nutritional strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use appropriate strategies to educate and encourage clients about healthy eating within scope of practice and current government guidelines.</li> </ul>
S6.3	Credible sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distinguish between credible and non-credible sources of nutritional information and guidance.</li> <li>• Provide clients with appropriate information and/or signposting according to their individual health and nutrition needs.</li> </ul>

## 7. Information technology

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Personal Trainer must:
K7.1	Business operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand how IT systems support:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Finance and accounting</li><li>– Marketing and sales</li></ul></li><li>• Know how to keep record and manage data.</li></ul>
K7.2	Available technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand how data can be monitored and interpreted using a range of available systems: e.g. CRM, social media.</li><li>• Understand how technological advancements can be used to support the customer experience to increase physical activity levels, motivation and focus: e.g. wearable technology, pedometers, mobile phone applications.</li></ul>
K7.3	Ethical and legislative practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand current legislation and ethical practice that affects the use of technology: e.g. Data Protection Act, intellectual property (IP), patents and copyright.</li></ul>
Ref	Skills:	A Personal Trainer must be able to:
S7.1	Incorporating technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use appropriate products and IT to support and manage effective personal training: e.g. record keeping, sales and invoicing, client and group management, class scheduling, retention levels, session reminders, data analysis/interpretation (and how to present it).</li></ul>

## 8. Professional practice

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Personal Trainer must:
K8.1	Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Know how to conduct themselves and portray a professional image:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Positive, honest, empowering, personal integrity, respectful of clients and other professionals, motivating, trustworthy, committed, non-judgemental, consistent, personal conduct, role model, how to portray a professional image.</li></ul></li></ul>
K8.2	Ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand professional ethics related to own role:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Professional membership, role boundaries/scope of practice and responsibilities, representation of skills, abilities, and knowledge, interface with other relevant professionals, business practices and professional code of conduct.</li></ul></li></ul>
K8.3	Legislation and organisational procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Know current legislation and organisation procedures relevant to own role:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– e.g. 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.</li></ul></li></ul>

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Skills:</b>	<b>A Personal Trainer must be able to:</b>
<b>S8.1</b>	Ensure responsibility and professional duty of care to clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure client safety and wellbeing at all times.</li> <li>• Demonstrate compliance with relevant legal responsibilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– e.g. health and safety at work, equality and diversity, safeguarding, data protection, hazard identification, safe working practices, ethics and professional conduct.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>S8.2</b>	Clarify roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educate client about own role, responsibilities and limitations in providing assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– e.g. scope of practice.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## 9. Communication

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Knowledge and understanding:</b>	<b>A Personal Trainer must:</b>
<b>K9.1</b>	Professionally interact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how to professionally interact with clients and relevant professionals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– How to introduce oneself, rapport building, connecting with people to create a positive experience, adapting communication style to suit client needs, presenting accurate information: e.g. sensitivity, discretion, non-judgemental manner, respect the individuality of the client, language and terms understood by client/simplify technical information, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>K9.2</b>	Communication techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand different communication techniques and how to use them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Observation/non-verbal techniques/body language, negotiation, open/closed questioning, motivational interviewing techniques: e.g. developing “importance”, “confidence” and “readiness”, dealing with resistance to change, using open-ended questioning, reflective statements, paraphrasing, summarising, decisional balance sheet, active listening.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<b>Ref</b>	<b>Skills:</b>	<b>A Personal Trainer must be able to:</b>
<b>S9.1</b>	Professionally interact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a range of communication techniques to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Introduce oneself.</li> <li>– Build rapport.</li> <li>– Create a positive customer experience.</li> <li>– Suit the client needs e.g. their stage of change.</li> <li>– Present clear and accurate information.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



## 10. Business acumen

Ref	Knowledge and understanding:	A Personal Trainer must:
K10.1	Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand relevant marketing strategies and techniques<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– e.g. brand awareness, self-promotion, market research (e.g. SWOT/PEST analysis), how to develop a marketing plan.</li></ul></li></ul>
K10.2	Business planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Understand aspects of business planning relevant to own role:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– e.g. individual and organisational goals, targets and objectives (e.g. key performance indicators), client-facing services and products, sales and how to grow a client base, activities to support business objectives and growth.</li></ul></li></ul>
K10.3	Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Know how to manage own business financials:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– e.g. budgeting (e.g. forecasting, sales and targets), profit and loss (e.g. gross profit, net gain) and balance sheets, tax and insurance legislation, financial reporting, self-employed and employed UK requirements.</li></ul></li></ul>

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