



Higher National Unit specification: general information

Unit title: Deliver Personal Training Sessions

Unit code: H1S4 34

Superclass: MD

Publication date: July 2012

Source: Scottish Qualifications Authority

Version: 02, December 2021

Unit purpose

This Unit is designed to enable the candidate to undertake the planning, delivery, review, and adaption of a personal training programme with (apparently) healthy adults of all ages

This may include young people in the 14–16 age range (provided they are part of a larger adult group), individual older adults, ante and postnatal clients, and disabled clients, provided relevant contraindications and key safety guidelines are observed. It should be noted that the Unit does not cover running specialist **whole** classes for young people, older adults, ante and postnatal and disabled clients. SQA has developed specialist Units which are available for these types of classes:

- DP2D 34 *Physical Activity for Children* — SCQF Level 7
- DW66 34 *Plan, Teach and Evaluate a Physical Activity Programme to Meet the Needs of Older Adults* — SCQF Level 7
- DW61 35 *Exercise for Pre and Post Natal Clients* — SCQF Level 8
- DD2H 35 *Assisting Sports for Disability* — SCQF Level 8

On completion of the Unit the candidate should be able to:

- 1 Understand how to plan, instruct, review, and adapt personal training programmes.
- 2 Undertake the planning, delivery, review, and adaption of a personal training programme.

General information (cont)

This is one of a suite of Units developed to allow candidates the opportunity to achieve the National Occupational Standard for Personal Training at Level 3. Further information is available through the Sector Skills Council (Skillsactive), and centres are advised to check that candidates have completed appropriate aspects of the NOS. Units within this suite fall within the HNC/D award in Fitness, Health and Exercise. Other specialist Units within this suite are:

- ◆ *Working Effectively and Safely with Clients*
- ◆ *Planning and Management of Personal Training*
- ◆ *Core Strength and Posture*
- ◆ *Metabolic Considerations for Personal Trainers*

Recommended prior knowledge and skills

It is recommended that prior to undertaking this Unit candidates should be familiar with human anatomy and physiology, the role and contributions of nutrients, health screening procedures, gym based exercise programmes and key components of Health and Safety. The following HN Units would give this knowledge base:

DW60 34	<i>Exercise Physiology and Anatomy</i>
DP8E 34	<i>Exercise Principles and Programming</i>
DT4W 34	<i>Nutrition for Fitness, Health and Exercise</i>
DP2L 34	<i>Health Screening</i>
F9T6 34	<i>Plan, Teach and Evaluate a Gym Based Exercise Session</i>
DF87 34	<i>Health and Safety Legislation: An Introduction</i>

Credit points and level

1.5 Higher National Unit credits at SCQF level 7: (12 SCQF credit points at SCQF level 7*)

**SCQF credit points are used to allocate credit to qualifications in the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF). Each qualification in the Framework is allocated a number of SCQF credit points at an SCQF level. There are 12 SCQF levels, ranging from Access 1 to Doctorates.*

Core Skills

There are opportunities to develop the Core Skills of *Problem Solving*, *Working with Others* and *Communication* in this Unit, although there is no automatic certification of Core Skills or Core Skills components

Context for delivery

This Unit is an option within the Group Awards HNC/D Fitness, Health and Exercise. If this Unit is delivered as part of a Group Award, it is recommended that it should be taught and assessed within the subject area of the Group Award to which it contributes.

The Assessment Support Pack (ASP) for this unit provides assessment and marking guidelines that exemplify the national standard for achievement. It is a valid, reliable and practicable assessment. Centres wishing to develop their own assessments should refer to

the ASP to ensure a comparable standard. A list of existing ASPs is available to download from SQA's website (<http://www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/46233.2769.html>).

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards

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The sections of the Unit stating the Outcomes, Knowledge and/or Skills, and Evidence Requirements are mandatory.

Where evidence for Outcomes is assessed on a sample basis, the whole of the content listed in the Knowledge and/or Skills section must be taught and available for assessment. Candidates should not know in advance the items on which they will be assessed and different items should be sampled on each assessment occasion.

Outcome 1

Describe instructional methods which may be used when delivering a personal training programme.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Use and adaptation of different communication styles.
- ◆ Evaluation and adaptation of motivational techniques.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain the use and effectiveness of verbal and non-verbal communication when instructing clients
- ◆ describe how to adapt communication methods to meet clients' needs
- ◆ describe how client motivation may be analysed and maintained

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Deliver Personal Training Sessions

Outcome 2

Describe methods of adapting exercises when delivering a personal training programme.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Rationale and methodology for monitoring client progress.
- ◆ Rationale and methodology for adaptation of exercises.
- ◆ Rationale and methodology for obtaining and giving effective client feedback.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ explain why it is important to monitor individuals' progress
- ◆ describe how clients' progress may be monitored during exercise
- ◆ explain when and how to adapt planned exercises to meet clients' needs
- ◆ explain why it is important that client are given full and accurate information regarding their progress
- ◆ explain when and how personal trainers may effectively give clients' feedback

Outcome 3

Prepare to deliver a personal training programme.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Development of a personalised training programme.
- ◆ Identification, sourcing and preparation of appropriate resources.
- ◆ Client preparation for participation.
- ◆ Reflective practice.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Plan a range of activities to help clients achieve their objectives and goals:
 - plans must include activities which can be run in environments not specifically designed for exercise
- ◆ Ensure clients understand how the planned activities meet their objectives and goals
- ◆ Identify, obtain and prepare appropriate resources for the planned activities,
- ◆ Ensure the client is adequately prepared for safe and effective participation in the planned activities
- ◆ Explain the value of reflective practice.

Higher National Unit specification: statement of standards (cont)

Unit title: Deliver Personal Training Sessions

Outcome 4

Instruct, review, and adapt, a personal training programme.

Knowledge and/or Skills

- ◆ Delivery and management of a personal training programme.
- ◆ Bringing a personal training session safely to an end.
- ◆ Reflection and review of personal training sessions.

Evidence Requirements

Candidates will need to provide evidence to demonstrate their Knowledge and/or Skills by showing that they can:

- ◆ Explain and deliver safe, effective and appropriate warm up and cool-down activities to clients
- ◆ Provide instructions, explanations and demonstrations that are technically correct, safe, and make effective use of the selected environment
- ◆ Analyse clients' performance, provide feedback appropriate to client goals, correct techniques as required, and progress or modify exercises.
- ◆ Candidates should instruct the following:
 - cardiovascular fitness equipment and training types: this must include at least two from continuous training, interval training, and fartlek training
 - muscular fitness: resistance machinery, barbells and dumbbells: this must include correct lifting techniques and spotting, and use of at least four different resistance systems from this list: pyramids; super sets, tri sets, giant sets, pre/post exhaustion sets, negative and eccentric methods.
 - core stability: at least one exercise must be taught
- ◆ Review:
 - how well the sessions met clients' goals
 - how effective and motivational the relationship with the client was
 - how well the instructing styles matched the clients' needs
 - how to improve personal practice

Higher National Unit specification: support notes

Unit title: Deliver Personal Training Sessions

This part of the Unit specification is offered as guidance. The support notes are not mandatory.

While the exact time allocated to this Unit is at the discretion of the centre, the notional design length is 60 hours.

Guidance on the content and context for this Unit

This Unit is designed to enable the candidate to develop their understanding of programme planning, with emphasis on the collection and interpretation of information in order to prepare and deliver personal training programmes for clients.

For centres who wish to register candidates with CIMSPA for Personal Trainer Practitioner, candidates must generate additional evidence by completing the associated appendix questions and observation checklist (only required if APL is not being applied). If APL is not to be applied, centres must ensure the following evidence is generated.

- 4 session plans for small groups
- 1 practical observation checklist for small groups
- Centres must ensure that individual small group sessions are carried out in a minimum of 2 different environments

Appendix worksheets with example answers are located in the SQA Assessment Support Pack.

Outcome 1: Describe instructional methods which may be used when delivering a personal training programme

- ◆ Candidates should be able to describe different methods of communicating with clients, including verbal and non-verbal techniques, and how these may be adapted in order to respond to client needs. These may include body language, pitch and tone of voice, positioning and client engagement.
- ◆ Candidates should be able to describe and evaluate the appropriateness of different motivational tools. Emphasis should be placed on the use of different methodologies which may be used to help clients overcome plateaux in development. Methods may include goal setting, targets and rewards, visualisation, self-talk, alternative strategies to help clients who have relapsed, helping clients to identify barriers to progress.

Outcome 2: Describe methods of adapting exercises when delivering a personal training programme

- ◆ Candidates should be able to explain the importance of monitoring clients' progress, and identify different methods for implementing this. Rationale may include the importance of safety, intensity of exercise, identification of errors and maintenance of correct and appropriate exercise technique
- ◆ Candidates should be able to recognise when it is necessary to adapt exercises, and how to achieve this effectively. Exercises may need to be adapted depending on the client/s, their identified needs and abilities, availability of equipment, or the environment in which the session is being conducted. Methods of adaptation may include intensity,

time and type, position, exercise modality, instructional method. Different evaluative techniques such as rate of perceived exertion, heart rate monitoring, questioning and visual assessment may be used

- ◆ Candidates should be able to recognise the importance of effective feedback, and use appropriate methods to deliver it. These should be appropriate to the client, and should aim to maintain and/or improve client motivation. Feedback should cover previously identified goals (physical, nutritional, social and psychological), issues which may arise during sessions relating to the planned programme.
- ◆ Candidates should be able to provide effective programme review with clients which relates to progression and development. It is important that clients can develop sufficient skills to enable them to work unsupervised. Clients' ability to undertake self-monitoring should be developed.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Deliver Personal Training Sessions

Outcome 3: Prepare to deliver a personal training programme

- ◆ Candidates should be able to plan activities which will help clients achieve their identified goals. In order to do this they will have to identify, obtain and prepare appropriate resources, and ensure that both environment and clients are adequately prepared for safe and effective participation. Cognisance should be taken of the need to identify credible sources of information relating to programme design and safe exercise, the need to include a range of safe and effective exercises/activities to develop the following areas:
 - cardiovascular fitness: this may include continuous training, interval training, and fartlek training
 - muscular fitness: this may include different resistance systems such as circuit weight training, single sets, basic sets, Delorme-Watkins, Berger, pyramids, (ascending/ descending), super sets, tri sets, giant sets, forced reps, drop sets, strip sets, negatives, cheating, strict form, rest-pause, and partial reps (this list is not exhaustive)
 - flexibility: this may include different flexibility development strategies such as isometric stretching, PNF stretching, and static stretching
 - motor skills
 - core stability
- ◆ Candidates should be able to explain the value of reflective practice, and exemplify this in the design and delivery of client programmes.

Outcome 4: Instruct, review, and adapt a personal training programme

- ◆ Candidates should be able to prepare clients appropriately for the planned exercise session. This may include explanation of the planned activities and how they relate to identified goals, and explanation of the physical and technical demands of the session. It is important that candidates are able to accurately assess clients' state of readiness (in terms of behaviour change theory) to ensure effective programme delivery.
- ◆ Candidates should be able to develop and use effective and appropriate warm up and cool down activities which make effective use of the exercise environment. Warm up may include pulse raising, mobility, activity specific movement and dynamic flexibility work. Cool down may include activities to return body to pre-exercise state.
- ◆ Candidates should be able to provide instructions, explanations and demonstrations which are technically correct, safe and effective. This should be done using effective communication methods which may include both verbal and non-verbal techniques.
- ◆ During the session, candidates should be able to analyse clients' performance, provide feedback appropriate to client goals, correct techniques as required, and progress or regress exercises. Methods of progression may include increased intensity, alternate body position, increased range of movement or complexity.
- ◆ Candidates should ensure that clients develop skills to enable them to exercise unsupervised
- ◆ Candidates should provide clients with consistent and sensitive feedback to maximise motivation. This may include positive reinforcement, together with linking activities and progress to identified goals.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Deliver Personal Training Sessions

- ◆ Candidates should review
 - how well the sessions met clients' goals. This should relate to long, medium and short term goals as previously agreed
 - how effective and motivational the relationship with the client was, and how well the instructing styles matched clients' needs. This should relate to clients' stage of readiness and fitness, needs, abilities and preferences
 - how to improve personal practice. Candidates should identify strategies to review and improve practice — these may include self-evaluation, continuing professional development, and feedback from other professionals

Guidance on the delivery of this Unit

This Unit should be delivered as one of a number of optional Units that will fully prepare the candidate for work as an exercise professional. This Unit is intended to provide candidates with a further knowledge and understanding of the skills particularly important in planning an individualised programme. This will enhance the skills of the exercise professional by increasing their awareness of the wide variety of environments and approaches to exercise programming, and to enable a more personalised approach to the development of exercise programmes.

Candidates should develop awareness of the roles of different programming systems and exercise environments; therefore the learning and teaching process should involve a holistic approach including practical case studies. The purpose of this Unit is also to encourage candidates to look beyond the obvious, and start to apply the concept of a client centred approach. The Unit terminology involved is complex in nature and it is important that candidates become comfortable and competent in its use, whilst at the same time being able to explain issues to clients in everyday terms.

Guidance on the assessment of this Unit

It is likely that the Unit would be assessed as an extended practical, where the candidate takes a client through the complete process from screening, through programme planning, and the delivery of a session and subsequent review. This would be followed up by a question and answer session with the assessor where knowledge and understanding are scrutinised to ensure coverage of all required criteria.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Deliver Personal Training Sessions

Assessment Guidelines

Outcome 1

Questions best suited to this Outcome would be restricted response, though other options may be used if appropriate

Outcome 2

Questions best suited to this Outcome would be restricted response, though other options may be used if appropriate

Outcome 3

This may be done either as a series of restricted response questions or as a series of case studies. It could potentially be integrated with the assessment for 'Planning and Management of Personal Training' and/or 'Metabolic Considerations for Personal Trainers'. If this is done candidates must still produce a rationale to achieve the stated Evidence Requirements.

Outcome 4

It is likely that this assessment would be completed as a practical case study. It could potentially be integrated with the assessment for 'Planning and Management of Personal Training'.

Online and Distance Learning

If this Unit is delivered by open learning methods, additional planning resources may be required for candidate support, assessment and quality assurance.

Higher National Unit specification: support notes (cont)

Unit title: Deliver Personal Training Sessions

Opportunities for developing Core Skills

All elements of the Core Skill of *Problem Solving*, that is, Planning and Organising, Critical Thinking, and Reviewing and Evaluating, could be developed and enhanced in the Unit as candidates plan, undertake and evaluate the complex practical tasks required to provide evidence of competence. Detailed preparation for session delivery is critical to achievement. Identifying all available resources including appropriate checking of equipment and environment underpins efficient use in order to maximise impact, and overcome potential difficulties — this will involve a high level of critical thinking. Justifying and adopting effective strategies which reflect and apply current theory will be an integral aspect of each session. Producing and delivering a balanced, safe session/programme should allow on-going opportunities for review and potential adjustment. After the session has been delivered, candidates have to complete a personal evaluation which will reinforce analytical approaches, enhance overall achievement, and signpost future activities and further development.

Disabled candidates and/or those with additional support needs

The additional support needs of individual candidates should be taken into account when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment instruments, or considering whether any reasonable adjustments may be required. Further advice can be found on our website www.sqa.org.uk/assessmentarrangements

CIMSPA Recognition

For centres who wish to register candidates with CIMSPA for Personal Trainer Practitioner, candidates must generate additional evidence by completing the associated ASP appendix questions and assessors must ensure the additional observation checklist is completed during the formative or summative assessment. This must include candidates being observed during an individual induction AND a small group induction (minimum of 2 participants). Appendix worksheets with example answers are located in the SQA Assessment Support Pack.

History of changes to Unit

Version	Description of change	Date
02	Additional guidance on centres that wish to register for CIMSPA Personal Trainer Practitioner recognition	08/12/2021

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General information for candidates

Unit title: Deliver Personal Training Sessions

Personal trainers must be able to prepare, deliver, adapt and review personalised exercise programmes, and this Unit aims to further develop your abilities in this area. You will develop skills to enable collection and application of information, applying current exercise guidelines, the importance of identifying contra-indications and the requirements of individuals, all of which will help you to maximise the effectiveness of training programmes. The Unit will help you to identify, understand and apply current guidance on a variety of issues which affect personal training clients. You should be able to deliver an effective programme to a client

Outcome 1: Describe instructional methods which may be used when delivering a personal training programme

After completion of this Outcome you should be able to describe different methods of communicating with clients. This will include both verbal and non-verbal techniques such as body language, pitch and tone of voice, positioning, how to engage effectively with clients. You will also look at how these methods may be adapted in order to respond to specific client needs. You'll also look at different motivational tools and how they can be individualised, with specific regard to helping clients overcome plateaux in their performance. This may include goal setting, development of targets, and helping clients to identify barriers to their own progress.

Outcome 2: Describe methods of adapting exercises when delivering a personal training programme

After completion of this Outcome you should be able to explain the importance of monitoring clients' progress, and identify different methods for implementing this. You will look at safety, intensity of exercise, identification of errors and the importance of correct and appropriate exercise technique. You'll look at when and how to adapt exercises, and how to achieve this effectively. You'll concentrate on the importance of effective feedback and review, and this may be delivered appropriately to maximise client motivation.

Outcome 3: Prepare to deliver a personal training programme

After completion of this Outcome you should be able to plan activities which will help clients achieve their identified physical, nutritional, social and psychological goals. In order to do this you will have to identify, obtain and prepare appropriate resources, and ensure that both environment and clients are adequately prepared for safe and effective participation. You will be able to identify safe and effective exercises/activities to develop cardiovascular fitness, muscular fitness, flexibility, motor skills and core stability. You will evaluate methods of reflective practice, and be able to put this into practice in the design and delivery of client programmes.

General information for candidates (cont)

Unit title: Deliver Personal Training Sessions

Outcome 4: Instruct, review, and adapt a personal training programme

After completion of this Outcome you should be able to prepare clients appropriately for the planned exercise in terms of effective warm up, explanation of the planned activities and how they relate to identified goals, and ensuring clients are aware of the physical and technical demands of the session. You will be able to accurately assess clients' state of readiness in order to maximise the effectiveness of programme delivery.

You will be able to provide instructions, explanations and demonstrations which are technically correct, safe and effective for exercises and activities in all of the identified modalities using effective communication methods.

Whilst delivering the session, you should be able to analyse clients' performance, provide feedback appropriate to client goals, correct techniques as required, progress or regress exercises, and help clients to develop skills enabling them to work without direct supervision. You will be able to provide clients with consistent and effective feedback to maximise motivation.

After the session you will be able to review how well the sessions met clients' goals, how effective and motivational the relationship with the client was, how well the instructing styles matched the clients' needs, and how to improve personal practice.