USP55M
Instructing gym-based exercise

Unit reference number: M/507/5604
Level: 2
Guided Learning (GL) hours: 42

Overview

This unit is about providing learners with the knowledge, understanding and practical skills to instruct and supervise effectively gym-based exercise for apparently healthy adults (individuals and groups). Learners will develop the skills to prepare clients for a gym-based exercise session. Learners will also develop instructional and observational skills to ensure clients exercise safely and effectively. Additionally, learners will develop the skills to reflect on their own practice and the knowledge of ways to improve their professional practice.

The unit will include information on how to adapt and integrate healthy special populations into occasional sessions, including – young people aged 14 – 16 (provided they are in a larger adult group), older adults, antenatal and postnatal clients and disabled clients (provided the relevant contra-indications and safety guidelines are observed).

NB: To work with special population clients on a regular basis requires additional study and qualifications.

Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit, learners will:

LO1 Know how to prepare self, clients and equipment for gym-based exercise
LO2 Know how to instruct and supervise gym-based exercise
LO3 Know how to review gym-based exercise sessions and reflect on their own performance
LO4 Be able to prepare self, clients and equipment for gym-based exercise
LO5 Be able to instruct and supervise gym-based exercise
LO6 Be able to review gym-based exercise sessions and reflect on their own performance
Assessment requirements

Learners must complete all **four** assessment requirements related to this unit:

1. Service portfolio
2. Graded practical assessment
3. External examination
4. Graded synoptic assessment

**1. Service portfolio**

Learners must produce an instructing gym service portfolio.

At a minimum the service portfolio for this unit must include, records of inductions, instruction of all components of a gym-based session, delivery of a full gym programme, reviews and evaluation of instructing gym-based sessions, covering all of the following:

- **Considered all the environmental factors**
  - Space
  - Layout
  - Temperature
  - Flooring
  - Lighting
  - Ventilation
  - Equipment
  - Personal clothing
  - Health and safety legislation and organisational procedures

- **Carried out an induction to all equipment**
  - At least 3 cardiovascular machines
  - At least 4 fixed resistance machines
  - At least 4 free weight exercises, including safe lifting and passing
  - At least 3 body weight exercises

- **Delivered all components of the session:**
  - At least 1 warm up component
  - At least 1 cardiovascular component
  - At least 1 resistance training component
  - At least 1 cool-down and stretch component
  - At least 1 using a circuit format

- **Worked with all types of client:**
  - Individuals
  - Groups
  - Inclusion of special populations

- **Demonstrated all instructional techniques:**
  - Explanation
  - Demonstration
  - Teaching points
  - Change of teaching position
  - Adaptations
  - Motivational strategies
  - Correction
- Questioning
- Feedback

- Evaluated all instructional techniques:
  - All above
  - Personal action plan (written or verbal)
  - Continuing professional development (workshops, reading, conference, lectures, online)

Evidence from the graded practical assessment must also be presented in the service portfolio.

The service portfolio must be completed prior to learners undertaking the graded practical skills test. Whilst assessment portfolios will not be graded, they may be sampled by the VTCT External Quality Assurer (EQA).

2. Graded practical assessment

Learners must instruct a complete gym-based exercise programme with a client (an apparently healthy adult), which will be observed, marked and graded by centre assessors. The grade achieved in the graded practical assessment will be the grade awarded for the unit.

The graded practical assessment must take place in a real or realistic working environment on a real or realistic client. At a minimum the graded practical assessment for this unit must cover:

- Equipment:
  - At least 3 cardiovascular machines
  - At least 4 fixed resistance machines
  - At least 4 free-weight exercises, including lifting and passing information
  - At least 3 body weight exercises

- Delivery of all components of the session:
  - At least 1 warm up component
  - At least 1 cardiovascular component
  - At least 1 resistance training component
  - At least 1 cool-down and stretch component

- Demonstration of instructional techniques:
  - Explanation
  - Demonstration
  - Teaching points
  - Change of teaching position
  - Adaptations
  - Motivational strategies
  - Correction
  - Questioning
  - Feedback

- Evaluation of instructional techniques: (as listed above)

Recorded professional discussion can also be used as an assessment instrument attached to the graded practical assessment and is particularly useful for gathering evidence for criteria related to working with special populations, using circuit approaches, evaluation and reflection. Professional discussions should be planned and recorded.
3. External examination

Whilst the theory content of LO1, LO2 and LO3 may be naturally assessed in the graded practical assessment, it will be tested by an external examination at the end of the period of learning.

External examinations will test knowledge and understanding from across the whole vocational area (mandatory units). Learners should use the unit content section of this unit to aid revision since exam questions will test the full breadth of this section.

External examinations will be set and marked by VTCT and will contribute to the overall qualification grade.

4. Graded synoptic assessment

In the last term or final third of their qualification, learners will be required to undertake a graded synoptic assessment. This will require learners to carry out a range of activities from across the whole vocational area (mandatory units). Assessment coverage will vary year on year, although all activities will be covered over time.

VTCT will set a brief for centres which will detail the activities to be covered in the graded synoptic assessment. Grading descriptors for the synoptic assessment will also be provided by VTCT.

The graded synoptic assessment will be marked and graded by centre staff and externally verified by VTCT.

The graded synoptic assessment will contribute to the overall qualification grade.
Unit content

LO1 Know how to prepare self, clients and equipment for gym-based exercise

Learners must know how to prepare self and equipment for gym-based exercise:

- **Professional image**
  - Personal clothing and footwear
  - Hygiene and appearance
  - Punctuality
  - Behaviour and language
  - Organised
  - Polite

- **Client records**
  - Review planning documents to identify client needs
  - Prepare appropriate resources

- **Equipment**
  - Availability of cardiovascular machines, resistance machines, benches, racks, free weights (barbells and dumbbells), collars, mats, weight pins
  - Organise equipment to meet client needs and planned programme (individuals, groups). Prepare alternative equipment / exercises if required
  - Conduct relevant health and safety checks on equipment

- **Environment**
  - Conduct relevant health and safety checks for space, other users, temperature, ventilation, lighting, accessibility of fire exits
  - Know organisation procedures for
    - Fire procedure – location of fire exits, location of fire extinguishers, conduct for evacuation, location of meeting or assembly points, recording attendance
    - Accident or medical emergency procedure – location of duty first aider, location of first aid kits, other advisory emergency information: location of nearest office and telephone
    - Other health and safety information – correct manual handling of exercise equipment

Learners must know how to prepare clients for exercise:

- **Inductions**
  - All new exercises and equipment to be inducted prior to use, using an appropriate teaching sequence to instruct the exercises
  - Explain the purpose of exercises, physical and technical demands
  - Offer appropriate alternatives, as required

- **Help clients feel welcome and at ease**
  - Establish rapport
  - Demonstrate respect for equality and diversity
  - Maintain professional conduct (dress, behaviour, respect)
  - Adopt a friendly and informal approach
  - Demonstrate empathy, non-judgemental attitude
  - Answer questions in full and check client understanding
• Pre-exercise check
  - Verbal screening to check client readiness to exercise
  - Discuss planned exercises with the client
  - Give the client opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback
  - Confirm plan or revise planned exercises, amend plans according to client needs and preferences

• Outline health and safety considerations
  - Emergency procedures:
    ▪ Fire – location of fire exits, location of fire extinguishers, conduct for evacuation, location of meeting or assembly points
    ▪ Accident or medical emergency procedure – location of duty first aider, first aid kits, emergency telephone
  - Use of equipment – manual handling, correct lifting, passing and spotting technique, wiping down equipment after use, storage of equipment after use (return to racks)
  - Hydration – availability of drinking water

• Develop client knowledge of the purpose and value of exercises
  - Warm-up exercises – safety reasons, physiological and psychological preparation, reduce injury risk, specific skill rehearsal, improved main session exercise performance
  - Cardiovascular exercises – improve health and efficiency of heart, lungs, and vascular system
  - Resistance exercises – develop muscular strength and / or endurance, muscle shape and tone (hypertrophy), stronger bones (bone density), reduce risk of osteoporosis, improve posture, improve joint stability
  - Flexibility exercises – muscle length, reduced tension and tightness, develop or maintain range of motion, reduce injury risk, improve posture
  - Motor skill exercises – improve specific motor skills, e.g. co-ordination, balance, speed, power, reaction time, improve movement efficiency, improve functional movement
  - Cool down exercises – safety reasons, gradually return the body and mind to a resting state, lower heart rate, prevent blood pooling, develop or maintain flexibility, assist relaxation, promote recovery from exercise
LO2 Know how to instruct and supervise gym-based exercise

Learners must know a safe and effective gym-based session structure and content:

- **Clients** – apparently healthy, individuals, groups, special populations
- **Exercises** – full range of different exercises and equipment for all
  - Components of fitness – cardiovascular, muscular fitness (strength and endurance), flexibility, motor skills, circuit formats
  - Components of the session – warm-up and stretch, cardiovascular, muscular fitness (resistance machines, free-weights, body weight exercises for strength and/or endurance, cool down and stretch
- **Structure**
  - Warm-up – mobility, pulse raising, preparatory stretching, induction and skill rehearsal, gradual and progressive build up
  - Main workout – cardiovascular machines, resistance machines, free-weights, body weight exercises
  - Cool down – pulse lower after cardiovascular training, maintenance and development stretches, and using appropriate stretch positions
- **Adaptations and modifications**
  - Client needs – skill and fitness, pre-screening information and checks
  - Environmental needs – temperature, space, type and intensity of session, availability of equipment, other users

Learners must know safe and effective alignment for exercise positions:

- **Exercise positions** – sitting, standing, bent-over, lying (prone, supine, side), inclined, declined, all-fours, kneeling
- **Correct alignment** – neutral spine (in start positions), joint position (according to specific structure and range of movement (e.g. avoidance of locking/ hyperextension and excessive unwanted/unintended movement)
- **Postural and alignment cues** – standing tall and upright, equal spread of body weight in exercise start position, looking forward, weight-bearing joints unlocked (soft)
- **Machine/equipment adjustments for client positioning** – position of resistance machine pivot alignment with moving joint, adjustment of machine pins to select an appropriate resistance, positional indicators on machines, emphasis of body position and alignment when setting up to perform exercises
- **Specific technique instructions and teaching points for each exercise** – full range of cardiovascular machines, resistance machines, free weight exercises and body weight exercises. Use of appropriate teaching sequence when inducting equipment
Learners must know appropriate instructional and communication skills to observe and supervise clients:

- **Instructional skills**
  - Teaching sequence: for inducting new exercise
    - IDEA – Introduction, Demonstration, Explanation of Activity, Activate client
    - NAMSET – Name the Exercise, Name the Area working, Name the Muscle(s) used, Silent demonstration, Explain set up and teaching points, Teaching points/cues while client performs the exercise (relevant points/cues based on observation)
  - Explanations (as appropriate for client needs and environment)
    - Verbal explanations – technically correct instructions, to correct poor technique, to meet individual needs, positive reinforcement and praise, feedback on performance (timely, clear, motivational, positive praise, specific, clear and concise and tailored to individual needs)
  - Visual demonstrations of movements and techniques
    - Use of mirroring, technically correct and accurate demonstrations, effective posture, safe and effective alignment of exercise positions, quality of movement, appropriate empathic movement speed and range, use of visual reinforcement to correct alignment, e.g. pointing to correct action of joint movement, using hands to press own shoulders down to indicate lengthening of neck and keeping shoulders away from ears. Smiling as a form of praise and encouragement
  - Lifting and passing
    - Explain and demonstrate correct lifting techniques (deadlifting BB/DB safely from the floor), explain and demonstrate correct passing techniques (self-spotting, use of spotter, use of racks), your bar-my bar or similar communication technique for spotting with barbells

- **Communication and motivation skills:**
  - Verbal communication – positive language, volume, pitch and tone
  - Non-verbal communication – positive body language, hand gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, active listening
  - Appropriate to client needs (e.g. visual or hearing impairments, speakers of other languages), fair and equitable, personalised, new or returning clients, culturally competent interactions
  - Appropriate to environment (e.g. space, layout), use appropriate methods of voice projection (noisy or busy environments), use effective volume and pitch of voice (instructions, explanations, teaching points, motivation)
  - Motivational techniques
    - Appropriate to the client and exercise format
    - Positive reinforcement
    - Appropriate voice pitch and tone
    - Motivation – reward motivation, goal motivation, intrinsic self-motivation, peer-motivation, affirming statements
  - Supervision skills
    - Observation of clients from different angles and teaching positions (front, side, rear), observe clients body position and posture, technical performance
    - Respond to client needs
      - Use of positive and constructive feedback
      - Reinforcement of teaching points to correct technique and reinforce effective technique
      - Answer client questions
Other methods of correction, e.g. manual/touch, with sensitivity to client, seek permission first and guide to position rather than moving limbs.

Learners must know appropriate methods to monitor safety and intensity of exercise:

- Recognise signs of overexertion – breathlessness, pain or discomfort, change in skin colour, loss of co-ordination, client verbal expression
- Recognise potential signs of medical illness – asthma (wheezing); angina (chest pain), hypoglycaemia (confusion, aggression, disorientation)
- Monitor safety – exercise technique, use of equipment and behaviour in environment
- Monitor exercise intensity
  - Talk test
  - Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE)
  - Heart rate monitoring (within target heart rate zones)
  - Observation
- Appropriateness of methods – according to client needs, experience and availability of equipment, e.g. visual RPE scale, heart rate

Learners must know methods of adapting a gym-based exercise programme to meet client needs:

- Progression or regression – exercise mode (with bodyweight, using equipment or free weights, unloaded or loaded (weight-bearing) resistance, exercise order, number of exercises, intensity (repetitions, sets, speed, resistance, range of motion, rest, target heart rate) duration. Use of quick start, manual and other programme settings
- General needs – skill, fitness, confidence, achievement of goals, motivation

Learners must know methods of developing client co-ordination:

- Start with basic movements, light resistance, slow speed of movement, fewer reps
- Progress gradually – break the movements down into parts (starting position, phases of movement, end position), gradually build up parts of movement to whole movement, progress volume before intensity, ensure movement mastery before loading the movement

Learners must know principles of behaviour management for working with clients:

- Individuals or groups – how to establish rapport with the client or group, use positive and confident communication, present a professional image, maintain eye contact with the client/group, position group members effectively for explanations and demonstrations, consideration to teaching position, voice projection and observation
- Gym inductions – present clear aims for the induction, establish ground rules for gym etiquette (health and safety and conduct), minimise possible distractions during induction, manage group
Learners must know methods of adapting a gym-based exercise programme to meet special population needs:

- **Older adults (50+)**
  - Safe exercise guidelines – pre-exercise health screening, refer to other professionals if required, undertake longer and more gradual mobility and warm-up, undertake a gradually tapered cool down, exercise intensity must be at a challenging but health related level, use RPE scale to monitor intensity, emphasise correct exercise technique, increase duration of transitions, simplify exercise when required, learn new exercises at the most basic level, avoid extreme spinal flexion

- **Antenatal and postnatal women**
  - Screening tool (PARmed-X for pregnancy), non-exercisers should begin with 15 minutes continuous aerobic activity gradually increasing to 30 minutes, do not exceed 45 minutes duration, maintain adequate hydration and calorie intake, avoid exercising in hot and humid conditions, use the RPE scale to monitor intensity not heart rate, avoid supine exercise after 16 weeks of pregnancy, avoid prone exercise, avoid prolonged motionless standing, avoid heavy isometric exercise, avoid leg adduction and abduction against resistance, avoid loaded forward flexion, avoid rapid changes of direction, avoid uncontrolled twisting or ballistic movements, avoid risk of falling or trauma, avoid high intensity or impact exercise, re-educate post-natal women on posture and joint alignment before progressing, avoid crunching and twisting abdominal exercises, babies should be excluded from the exercise area, ensure instructor’s first aid skills are up-to-date, follow exercise guidelines for trimesters of pregnancy

- **Young people (aged 14 – 16)**
  - Safety guidelines – wear appropriate clothing and footwear, undertake a gradual warm up and cool down, avoid heavy resistance exercises, use RPE to monitor exercise intensity, resistance training should use lighter weights and higher reps, emphasise correct exercise technique, avoid ballistic stretching, ensure adequate hydration and calorie intake

- **Disabled people**
  - Safety guidelines – medical screening and referral prior to participation, refer to other professionals if required, consideration to equality and inclusion legislation, undertake exercise in a safe and supportive environment, make reasonable adjustments to enable access, adapt exercise for the specific disability, provide specialist assistance if required, incorporate functional and life related movement, use specialist equipment if required

**Learners must know how to demonstrate appropriate customer care:**

- **Positive image of self** – timekeeping, dress, hygiene, appearance, communication, professional behaviour
- **Positive image of organisation** – working relationship with colleagues, quality of customer care, branded uniform, promoting service level agreement
- **Working relationship with clients** – ethical, mutual respect and trust, maintain professional boundaries, fairness and equality
- **Working relationship with colleagues** – spotters, assistants, managers, other professionals
- **Providing information on other services to meet client needs**, e.g. group exercise
Learners must know how to end sessions safely and effectively:

- Appropriate to clients – individuals, groups, special requirements, level of fitness, skills level, experience
- Appropriate to session – intensity, duration and type of activities, e.g. cardiovascular, muscular fitness, flexibility, motor skills, circuit formats
- Appropriate to environment – temperature, space, time of day, intensity of session
- Provide clients with feedback – accurate summary of strengths and areas for improvement in relation to – technical performance and progress, motivation and effort, health and safety

Learners must know how to leave the environment in acceptable condition after use:

- Environment – clean, hygienic, tidy, temperature, ventilation, and lighting
- Equipment – clean, hygienic, removed and safely stored/stacked, secure storage of free weights, remove pins from resistance machines, report and record maintenance issues/faults
LO3 Know how to review gym-based exercise sessions and reflect on their own performance

**Learners must know how to review sessions with the client:**

- **Methods**
  - Use of open questions
  - Observation
  - Active listening
  - Affirming statements
  - Reflective statements
  - Summaries
  - Written questionnaires
  - Comment cards
- **Gather information from client**
  - Session content and exercise selection
  - Equipment choice
  - Exercise intensity and duration
  - Client performance
  - Client progress
  - Instruction methods
  - Communication methods
  - Client enjoyment and satisfaction
- **Use own self evaluation**
  - Session content and exercise selection
  - Client feedback
  - Instruction methods
- **Provide feedback to client on**
  - Performance and progress
  - Achievement of goals
  - Future sessions and training without supervision
- **Ensure clients understand their programme**
  - Overall purpose of the programme to meet specific goals and objectives
  - Different programme components, details of activities and exercises included in each component
  - Progressions and adaptations

**Learners must know the value of reflective practice:**

- To identify personal strengths
- To identify personal areas for improvement
- To improve professional practice and standards
- To more effectively plan and deliver gym-based exercise
- To more effectively meet client needs
- To improve instructional skills
- To progress career
- To increase work opportunities
- To stay responsive
**Learners must know ways to improve their professional practice:**

- Identify areas for personal improvement
  - Planning
  - Communication
  - Instruction
  - Motivation
- **Methods of monitoring**
  - Personal action plans
  - Personal goal setting
  - Record strengths and deficits
  - Identify continuing professional development activities
- **Activities**
  - Work experience
  - Working with peers
  - Shadowing other professionals
  - Mentoring
  - Workshops
  - Reading
  - Conferences
  - Lectures
  - Online resources and activities
  - Higher level qualifications
LO4 Be able to prepare self, clients and equipment for gym-based exercise

Check and prepare the environment, equipment and self, prior to instruction:
- Professional image and self presentation
- Client records and programme card available
- Equipment checked – availability and relevant health and safety checks
- Environment – conduct relevant health and safety checks for space, other users, temperature, ventilation, lighting, accessibility of fire exits, duty first aider, nearest telephone

Verbally screen the client and check their readiness to participate:
- Help clients feel welcome and at ease
- Verbal screening to check client readiness to exercise
- Refer or defer if required
- Discuss demand of programme
- Confirm or revise planned exercises
- Modify plan according to client feedback, needs and preferences

See LO1
LO5 Be able to instruct and supervise gym-based exercise

**Instruct a safe and effective warm-up appropriate to the client, programme and environment needs:**
- Mobility, pulse raising, preparatory stretching, induction and skill rehearsal
- Gradual and progressive build up
- Appropriate use of equipment
- Effective instruction and communication
- Induct any unfamiliar equipment

**Instruct a safe and effective cardiovascular programme that is appropriate to the client, programme and environment needs:**
- Gradual build up on intensity, work in target heart rate zone, gradual decrease of intensity
- Appropriate intensity and duration
- Appropriate use of equipment
- Effective instruction and communication
- Induct any unfamiliar equipment

**Instruct a safe and effective resistance programme that is appropriate to the client, programme and environment:**
- Whole body balance approach
- Appropriate equipment
- Appropriate intensity, repetitions, resistance, rate, range of motion
- Effective instruction and communication
- Induct any unfamiliar equipment

**Instruct a safe and effective cool down and stretch component that is appropriate to the client, programme and environment:**
- Rewarm muscles or pulse lower (as appropriate)
- Stretch muscles – maintenance and development, all muscles used in session
- Appropriate positions
- Effective instruction and communication

**Use instruction and communication skills to support and motivate the client:**
- Induct any unfamiliar equipment using appropriate teaching sequence
  - IDEA
  - NAMSET
- Explanations and demonstrations (as appropriate for client needs and environment)
  - Verbal explanations
  - Visual demonstrations
- Lifting and passing
- Observation of clients from different angles and teaching positions
- Respond to client needs
Monitor exercise safety and intensity and respond to client needs and feedback:
- Observation, RPE, talk test, heart rate monitoring
- Method appropriate for client
- Method appropriate for component
- Recognise signs of overexertion – breathlessness, pain or discomfort, change in skin colour, loss of co-ordination, client verbal expression

Leave the environment in an acceptable condition for other users:
- Environment – clean, hygienic, tidy, temperature, ventilation, and lighting
- Equipment – safely stored/stacked, remove pins from resistance machines, report and record maintenance issues/faults

See LO2
LO6 Be able to review gym-based exercise sessions and reflect on their own performance

Gather information from the client to review the gym-based session:
- Gather information from client
  - Session content and exercise selection
  - Client performance
  - Client progress
  - Instruction methods
  - Client enjoyment and satisfaction

Use client feedback and own evaluation to reflect on the gym-based session:
- Reflect on information gathered from client
- Use own self evaluation
  - Consideration to
    - Session content and exercise selection
    - Client feedback
    - Instruction methods
    - Communication skills
    - Health and safety
  - Identify strengths
  - Identify deficits or areas to improve
  - Identify ways to improve personal practice
  - Create an action plan to improve personal practice
    - Activities to assist development, e.g. reading, workshops
    - Purpose of activities to increase skills and / or knowledge

See LO3
Employability skills to be demonstrated throughout the graded practical assessment and synoptic assessment

Professionalism:
- Adherence and respect to industry codes of ethical practice, e.g. REPs, ukactive; health and safety legislation, including safeguarding, equality, diversity and inclusion legislation and organisational policies and procedures

Communication:
- Adapt and tailor their communication approach for different clients, e.g. new and existing clients – special populations (young people, older adults, ante- or post-natal women, disabled people), clients who are new to exercise, clients who are experienced exercisers, clients with different levels of motivation, clients with other needs, e.g. speakers of other languages, deaf or partially hearing, blind or partially sighted
- Communication – speaking manner and tone of voice, being supportive, empathetic, respectful, sensitive to client, use open questioning and active listening to gather feedback, be aware of body language, eye contact, gestures, posture, space and proximity. Sensitivity to clients with different communication styles

Customer service:
- Principles of customer service – quality, keeping promises, managing customer expectations, customer satisfaction, speed of service, follow organisation procedures for meeting and greeting and inducting clients to equipment. REPs code of conduct to inform all client working practices
- Examples of good practice in customer service – effective working relationships with diverse range of clients, positive presentation of self and organisation to clients, meeting and exceeding customer needs and expectations, adding a personal touch, providing personal attention, knowing client names, using polite language, making extra efforts to demonstrate willingness to please the customer, treating the customer as an individual
- Dealing quickly and effectively with a complaint – acknowledge complaint immediately (HEAT – Hear, Empathise, Apologise, Take action), handle complaints (privately, positively, confidently, professionally, promptly, confidentially, empathetically, with trust and respect, to client’s satisfaction), follow agreed procedures to check complaint has been dealt with. Use of incentives and rewards, free or reduced cost training sessions, or guest passes, gym challenges, social events, rewards, e.g. member of the month (based on attendance). Appropriate information sources to keep members up-to-date and informed about activities: timetables, noticeboard, e-mails, social networking sites, REPs code of conduct
- The importance of customer service to a business – professional image, reputation of instructor, organisation and industry sector, exercise adherence, customer retention, customer satisfaction, customer relationships and repeat business, including word of mouth recommendations and referrals

Commercial awareness:
Opportunities to promote and sell additional products and services
- Personal training sessions
- Training products (clothing and footwear, exercise mats, heart rate monitors, water bottles)
- Group exercise sessions, e.g. circuits, indoor cycling
- Other activities, e.g. social events, specialist talks, healthy snacks
- Swimming
- Racket sports
### Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria will be applied to the graded practical assessment. In order to pass this unit, learners must at a minimum achieve all pass criteria. The pass criteria relate to the proficient demonstration of skills and knowledge. All criteria within a given grade must be achieved to be awarded that grade.

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<th>Pass</th>
<th>Merit</th>
<th>Distinction</th>
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<td><strong>LO4</strong> Be able to prepare self, clients and equipment for gym-based exercise</td>
<td>P1 Check and prepare the environment, equipment and self, prior to instruction</td>
<td>M1 Use appropriate strategies to promote other gym-based services in accordance with the client’s needs</td>
<td>D1 Evaluate the effectiveness of instruction techniques and communication methods used during the gym-based session</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LO5</strong> Be able to instruct and supervise gym-based exercise</td>
<td>P2 Verbally screen the client and check their readiness to participate</td>
<td>M2 Adapt or tailor instructional and communication skills to enhance client performance in all components</td>
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<td>P3 Instruct a safe and effective warm up appropriate to the client, programme and environment needs</td>
<td>M3 Adapt or tailor exercise intensity or type according to client response and personal observations</td>
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<td>P4 Instruct a safe and effective cardiovascular programme that is appropriate to the client, programme and environment needs</td>
<td>M4 Analyse information gathered from the client to assess how the programme, instructional and communication skills met the client’s needs</td>
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<td>P5 Instruct a safe and effective resistance programme that is appropriate to the client, programme and environment</td>
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<td>P6 Instruct a safe and effective cool down and stretch component that is appropriate to the client, programme and environment</td>
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<td>P7 Use instruction and communication skills to support and motivate the client</td>
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<td>P8 Monitor exercise safety and intensity and respond to client needs and feedback</td>
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<td>P9 Leave the environment in an acceptable condition for other users</td>
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<td><strong>LO6</strong> Be able to review gym-based exercise sessions and reflect on their own performance</td>
<td>P10 Gather information from the client to review the gym-based session</td>
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<td>P11 Use client feedback and own evaluation to reflect on the gym based session</td>
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Assessment guidance

Assessors must use the amplified assessment guidance in this section to judge whether assessment criteria have been achieved in the graded practical assessment.

P1 Check and prepare the environment, equipment and self, prior to instruction

Learners must prepare the environment, equipment and self prior to instruction of the gym-based session.
Learners must check that the area is free from any obstructions, the space available for warm up and cool down activities, the number of other gym users, the flooring and the temperature of the area, availability of drinking water.
Learners must check that all equipment required for the session is available and operational.
Learners must make appropriate arrangements for the use of alternative exercises/equipment where equipment is not available, e.g. in use by other users or non-operational/out of order.
Learners must ensure they are prepared to instruct the session by wearing appropriate clothing and footwear and having all relevant planned programme records for the client available.

P2 Verbally screen the client and check their readiness to participate

Learners must welcome and verbally screen the client before instructing the session.
Learners must identify if the client needs to defer exercise or be sign-posted to another professional, prior to exercise. Learners must outline the demands of the planned session and check client readiness and modify the plan in response (if required) in response to client feedback.

P3 Instruct a safe and effective warm-up appropriate to the client, programme and environment needs

Learners must instruct a safe and effective warm up component, that is of an appropriate intensity and duration to meet the needs of the client (e.g. level of fitness) and the environment (e.g. temperature).
Learners must select appropriate exercises to mobilise joints, raise body temperature and lengthen the muscles. Learners must use at least one cardiovascular machine during the warm up. Learners must induct clients to any equipment that they have not previously used or to exercises that are new to them.
Learners must demonstrate a range of appropriate instructional skills when instructing the warm up, including – verbal instructions, demonstration (where appropriate), use of observation with appropriate changes of teaching position, reinforcement of teaching points and adaptation of exercises (as appropriate) and appropriate monitoring of exercise intensity.
P4 Instruct a safe and effective cardiovascular programme that is appropriate to the client, programme and environment needs

Learners must instruct a safe and effective cardiovascular programme, that is of an appropriate intensity and duration to meet the needs of the client (e.g. level of fitness) and the environment (e.g. temperature).

Learners must select an appropriate cardiovascular machine to increase the client’s heart rate to an appropriate target heart rate level and sustain this for a planned duration. Learners should ensure the client’s heart rate is lowered out of target heart rate zone at the end of the cardiovascular programme. Learners must induct clients to any equipment that they have not previously used.

Learners must demonstrate a range of appropriate instructional skills during the cardiovascular programme, including – verbal instructions, demonstration (where appropriate), use of observation with appropriate changes of teaching position, reinforcement of teaching points and adaptation of exercises (as appropriate) and appropriate monitoring of exercise intensity.

P5 Instruct a safe and effective resistance programme that is appropriate to the client, programme and environment

Learners must instruct a safe and effective resistance programme, that is of an appropriate intensity and duration to meet the needs of the client (e.g. level of fitness) and the environment (e.g. temperature).

Learners must select appropriate exercises (free weights, resistance machines, body weight exercises) to provide a balanced muscular workout. Learners must select the appropriate resistance, repetitions, sets, range and movement and speed to reflect the goals of the client and their skills and fitness. Learners must induct clients to any equipment that they have not previously used.

Learners must demonstrate a range of appropriate instructional skills during the resistance programme, including – verbal instructions, demonstration (where appropriate), use of observation with appropriate changes of teaching position, reinforcement of teaching points and adaptation of exercises (as appropriate) and appropriate monitoring of exercise intensity.

P6 Instruct a safe and effective cool down and stretch component that is appropriate to the client, programme and environment

Learners must instruct a safe and effective cool down and stretch component, that is of an appropriate intensity and duration to meet the needs of the client (e.g. level of fitness) and the environment (e.g. temperature).

Learners must select appropriate exercises to lower the heart rate or rewarm the muscles prior to stretching (as appropriate). Learners must select an appropriate stretch position, types of stretching (maintenance or development), range of motion and length of hold to reflect the goals of the client and their skills and fitness. Learners must induct clients to any equipment that they have not previously used (as appropriate).

Learners must demonstrate a range of appropriate instructional skills during the cool down and stretch, including – verbal instructions, demonstration (where appropriate), use of observation with appropriate changes of teaching position, reinforcement of teaching points and adaptation of exercises (as appropriate) and appropriate monitoring of exercise intensity.
P7 Use instruction and communication skills to support and motivate the client

Learners must use instructional skills and communication skills to support and motivate the client. Learners must communicate information positively, constructively and in a way that is appropriate to meet the needs of the client, their skill and fitness level and level of confidence.

Learners must demonstrate the full range of instructional skills through all components, including – verbal instructions, demonstration (where appropriate), use of observation with appropriate changes of teaching position, reinforcement of teaching points and adaptation of exercises (as appropriate) and appropriate monitoring of exercise intensity.

P8 Monitor exercise safety and intensity and respond to client needs and feedback

Learners must monitor exercise safety and intensity using methods that are appropriate to the client’s needs and the component of the session, e.g. observation, use of questioning, client feedback (verbal and non-verbal, e.g. facial expressions, loss of co-ordination), talk-test, rating of perceived exertion (RPE) and/or heart rate monitoring.

Learners must respond appropriately to the information gathered or identified, e.g. adapt, modify, progress, change or stop the exercise.

P9 Leave the environment in an acceptable condition for other users

Learners must ensure the environment is left clean and clear. All equipment used during the session should be returned to the appropriate place for storage, e.g. weights returned to racks and weight pins removed from resistance stacks.

P10 Gather information from the client to review the gym-based session

Learners must ask the client open questions at the end of the session to gather information about the effectiveness of exercises, effectiveness of instructional skills and clients understanding, effectiveness of motivation and support. Learners should also ask clients if there is anything that would like to change or modify.

P11 Use client feedback and own evaluation to reflect on the gym based session

Learners must use the information gathered from client and their own personal evaluation to reflect on the safety and effectiveness of the gym-based session. Learners must consider the structure of the session and the timings, type and intensity of exercises selected for each component and the appropriateness of each of these to meet the client needs. The information should be recorded on a session evaluation record.

M1 Use appropriate strategies to promote other gym-based services in accordance with the client’s needs

Learners must use appropriate strategies and communication skills to explain the value of other gym-based services to meet the client needs and goals, for example – other types of exercise, such as – circuits, indoor cycling, suspension training; personal training; or the use of other resources, such as – swimming pool, sauna, healthy snacks etc.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>M2 Adapt or tailor instructional and communication skills to enhance client performance in all components</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learners must demonstrate they are able to adapt and tailor their instructional and communication skills to enhance client performance. Learners must demonstrate application of a range of appropriately timed and relevant instructional skills through the whole session, including – verbal instructions, demonstration (where appropriate), use of observation with appropriate and timely changes of teaching position, reinforcement of relevant teaching points and adaptation of exercises (in response to identified client needs) and the use of appropriate methods for monitoring exercise intensity. Learners must effectively use a range of communication skills (verbal, and non-verbal) to maximise client performance and motivate and support the client in an appropriate way to meet the client’s needs.</td>
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<th>M3 Adapt or tailor exercise intensity or type according to client response and personal observations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Learners must use their observation of clients and feedback gathered from clients during the session to respond in an appropriate and timely way and adapt or modify specific exercises to meet client needs, this may include changes to the exercise type, duration or exercise intensity, e.g. speed, level, resistance, range of motion, repetitions, rest. Learners must communicate changes in a motivational way to encourage the client.</td>
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<tr>
<th>M4 Analyse information gathered from the client to assess how the programme, instructional and communication skills met the client’s needs</th>
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<td>Learners must analyse the broad range of information gathered from clients, during the session and after the session to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme (content and structure), instructional skills and methods, and communication skills. Learners must be able to identify strengths in their practice and areas requiring development.</td>
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<tr>
<th>D1 Evaluate the effectiveness of instruction techniques and communication methods used during the gym-based session</th>
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<td>Learners must reflect on the information gathered from clients as well as their own self evaluation. They must evaluate strengths and deficits in their practice and the reasons why they consider these to be strengths or deficits. Learners must evaluate a full range of opportunities (continuing professional development, workshops, reading, shadowing an experienced instructor, mentor support and supervision) that may help them to improve their communication and instructional skills and also the content and structure of the planned session.</td>
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Resources

The special resources required for this unit are access to a real or realistic working environment which supports the provision of gym-based exercise and access to resources that assist the development of knowledge and skills to instruct safe and effective gym-based exercise programmes.

Best practice should be encouraged by giving learners the opportunity to access current research and guidelines that inform exercise science (e.g. NICE, ACSM, BASES, BHFNC, Department of Health).

**Recommended text books:**


NB: This list is not exhaustive. There are many other valuable text books.

**Recommended websites:**
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) – [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)
- American College of Sport Medicine (ACSM) – [www.acsm.org](http://www.acsm.org)
- British Association of Sport and Exercise Science – [www.bases.org.uk](http://www.bases.org.uk)
- British Heart Foundation National Centre – [www.bhfactive.org](http://www.bhfactive.org)
Delivery guidance

Teachers are encouraged to use innovative, practical and engaging delivery methods to enhance the learning experience. Learners may benefit from:

- Meaningful employer engagement so they relate what is being learned to the real world of work and understand commercial competency and product, tools and equipment usage in a gym-based exercise environment.
- Work experience within a gym so they can practise to hone their skills in a real environment.
- Using interactive information and technology, systems and hardware so they can learn about concepts and theories; research current trends in gym-based exercise.
- Planning and presentation workshops where they are able to discuss different instructional skills and methods of monitoring intensity and progressing and regressing exercises.
- Induction workshops, where they induct peers to each piece of equipment using an appropriate teaching sequence and explaining muscles worked, any restrictions, key teaching points.
- Practice workshops, where they are able to deliver specific components of a gym-based session to peers or ‘real’ clients in a supervised or simulated working environment, when available.
- Workplace visits or placements, where they are able to shadow an experienced instructor.
- Opportunities to work with a range of client types (individual differences, experience or skill level) with different needs and goals, in a real or realistic environment under appropriate supervision and guidance.
- Opportunities to work with a mentor (more experienced instructor or peers) to review and evaluate and their skills and identify areas for improvement.
- Opportunities to practise their instructional skills and work with peers or real clients under the supervision of the teacher who can use these opportunities to assess skills formatively and provide feedback.
Links with other units

This unit is closely linked with the following units:

**USP51M Anatomy and physiology for exercise and health**
Learners will be required to apply their knowledge of anatomy and physiology when instructing gym-based exercise sessions in a real or realistic working environment. The content of the anatomy and physiology unit should be delivered before the instructing gym-based exercise unit.

**USP52M Health, safety and welfare in a fitness environment**
Learners will be required to apply their knowledge of health and safety when instructing gym-based exercise sessions in a real or realistic working environment. Some content of the health and safety unit (risk assessment) should be delivered before the instructing gym-based exercise unit.

**USP53M Principles of exercise, fitness and health**
Learners will be required to apply their knowledge of the principles of exercise, fitness and health when instructing gym-based exercise sessions in a real or realistic working environment. The content of the principles unit should be delivered before the instructing gym-based exercise unit.

**USP54M Planning gym-based exercise**
Learners will be required to use the information gathered from clients in the planning gym-based exercise unit to instruct a gym-based session in a real or realistic working environment. The content of the planning unit can be integrated with the instructing gym-based exercise unit.

**USP56M Programming personal training with clients**
Learners will be require to use the knowledge and skills gained in the instructing gym-based exercise unit when programming personal training in real or realistic work environments. Learners must complete the planning and instructing gym-based exercise units before the programming personal training unit is delivered.

**USP57M Delivering personal training sessions**
Learners will be require to use the knowledge and skills gained in the instructing gym-based exercise unit when delivering personal training in real or realistic work environments. Learners must complete the planning and instructing gym-based exercise units before the delivering personal training unit is delivered.

**Graded synoptic assessment**
At the end of the qualification of which this unit forms part, there will be a graded synoptic assessment which will assess the learner’s ability to identify and use effectively in an integrated way an appropriate selection of skills, techniques, concepts, theories, and knowledge from a number of units from within the qualification. It is therefore necessary and important that units are delivered and assessed together and synoptically to prepare learners suitably for their final graded assessment.