Level 4 Award in Personal Training

EQF/MQF Level 4

Mode of delivery: Blended learning

Total learning hours: 400 h

Total number of ECTS: 16

Programme duration: 7 months

Mode of Attendance: Part-Time

Language: English

Target group: Adults (aged 18+) wishing to pursue a career in the health and fitness sector as gym-based personal trainers. Individuals, who already hold a gym instructor qualification, wishing to become self-employed by running their own personal training business.

Entry requirements:

- **A suitable Level 3 qualification in Fitness Instructing / Aqua Fitness Instructing / Group fitness Instructing**
- **The course requires physical exertion and individual participation is essential, therefore a degree of physical fitness is necessary**
- **There is an element of communication (discussing, presenting, reading and writing) and application of number involved, and learners should have basic skills in communication and application**

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of number pitched at levels 3 and 2 respectively

Program description:

The Personal Trainer is employed as an exercise professional who personally, supervises the client in one-to-one sessions. Personal trainer's role includes designing, implementing and evaluating exercise/physical activity programmes for a range of individuals clients by collecting and analyzing client information to ensure the effectiveness of personal exercise programmes. A personal trainer should also actively encourage potential clients/members to participate in and adhere to regular exercise/physical activity programmes, employing appropriate motivational strategies to achieve this.

Qualification Structure

This qualification comprises of 8 mandatory modules

Module	Module Title	ECTS	MQF Level
1.	APPLIED ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY	2	4
2.	NUTRITION	2	4
3.	INTRODUCTION TO EXERCISE REFERRAL	2	4
4.	INTRODUCTION TO SPORT PSYCHOLOGY	2	4
5.	PREVENTION OF INJURIES	2	4
6.	PROMOTING HEALTHY LIFESTYLE	2	4
7.	PROGRAMME PLANNING AND DELIVERY	2	4
8.	BUSINESS MANAGEMENT	2	4

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Module 1. **APPLIED ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY**	**Learning outcomes:**
Competences:	a) Determine the three energy pathways described and apply them in the coming units b) Know the structure and function of each system in the body c) Know the basics about bones, joints, connective tissue and their relationship to exercise d) Explain the classification of bones and joints in the human body focusing on their functional significance e) Describe articulations and the joint movements possible in all three planes of motion. f) Explain the different types of muscular contractions (concentric, eccentric, isometric, isotonic and isokinetic) and muscle action (the agonists, antagonists, main synergists and fixators) g) Explain the effect of physical activity on cardiovascular system h) Explain the link between cortisol hormone and weight management
Knowledge:	a) Understand the effects of physical training on the musculoskeletal system and apply this knowledge to training your clients, the 3 types of muscle in the human body (skeletal, smooth, cardiac) and the structural features and characteristics of muscles b) Know the structure and function of the cardiovascular system in relation to health and fitness, the relationship between the cardiovascular system and respiratory system and the cardiac cycle c) Know the structure and function of the skeletal system structure in relation to health and fitness d) Know the structure and function of the myofascial system in relation to health and fitness e) Know the structure and function of the nervous system in relation to health and fitness, the Central Nervous System (CNS) and the Peripheral Nervous System (PNS) and its divisions into Somatic and Autonomic branches f) Know the structure and function of the endocrine system in relation to health and fitness g) Understand the role of energy systems in relation to physical activity, exercise and training, the 3 energy systems used for the production of ATP, the terms aerobic and anaerobic threshold and the use and amounts of energy nutrients at different exercise intensities h) Know the structure and function of the digestive system in relation to health and fitness i) Understand the link between type of exercise intensity and hormonal reaction for specific goals like weight loss programme, muscle building and wellness programme

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Skills:	a) Site the names, locations and functions of the major muscles of the body b) Site the names, locations and functions of the major bones of the body c) Site the names, locations and functions of the major joints of the body d) Explain long & short-term effects of exercise on bones to include osteoporosis e) Point out abnormal degrees of curvature in the spine (lordosis, kyphosis and scoliosis) and apply correct postural alignment for exercises

Module 2. **NUTRITION**	**Learning outcomes:**
Competences:	a) Be able to calculate daily energy and nutrient requirements for clients with different goals b) Recognise the professional boundaries for a personal trainer with regard to providing nutritional information and advice
Knowledge:	a) Understand how to access credible information about nutrition for exercise and health b) Know common nutritional terms related to exercise and health c) Know the nutrients required to maintain health d) Know how nutrients from food are used to fuel and recover from physical activity e) Know the risks of poor nutritional and lifestyle practices, how lack of micronutrients influences health f) Know the nutritional considerations for specific client groups g) Understand the role of vitamins and minerals in cells metabolic process h) Know how some medical conditions (e.g. CHD, diabetes mellitus, obesity, ostheoporosis) may be impacted by nutrition (general advice)
Skills:	a) Be ablese appropriate methods to collect nutritional information from clients b) Use appropriate methods to analyse a client's nutritional information c) Be able to analyse clients' dietary habits and identify areas for improvement d) Be able to refer client to certified nutritionist for dietary plan

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Module 3. INTRODUCTION TO EXERCISE REFERRAL	Learning outcomes:
Competences:	a) Know what is necessary when dealing with client''s special needs such as disability b) Know when to refer client to other professional c) Know the risks and benefits of exercise for specific medical conditions d) Explain Coronary Heart Disease and risk factors that can manipulate it such as smoking, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, physical inactivity, diabetes mellitus, family history, age, stress, obesity e) Carry out the screening process to identify risk factors for coronary heart disease; factors that limit the ability to participate/achieve goals; those requiring a referral to an appropriate medical professional or other clinician or medically supervised exercise programme
Knowledge:	a) Understand how lifestyle factors affect a client's health and wellbeing b) Understand commonly occurring medical conditions and how they may impact a client's lifestyle c) Understand how to risk-strait and when to refer clients with common medical conditions d) Understanding the effect of medication on the cardiovascular system and their impact on training e) Understand the own limitations and when to refer clients to other relevant professionals, e.g.: exercise specialist, medical professional
Skills:	a) Be able to take precautions and/or refer when consulting a client with common medical conditions b) Be able to promote benefits of healthy lifestyle to a person with common medical conditions c) Be able to adapt basic programmes for participants with particular needs including sedentary, recovering from injury, over-trained, peak performer, sport specific performer, obese d) Be able to refer clients to other professionals: GP's, Physiotherapists, Neuromuscular therapists, Consultants etc. e) Analyse and interpret all the information collected regarding the client, identify any contraindications to them participating in exercise

Module 4. INTRODUCTION TO SPORT PSYCHOLOGY	Learning outcomes:
Competences:	a) Identify ways that an instructor can build social support and inclusion within a fitness environment b) Manage personal and professional development

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	c) Carry out effective communication: body language, smiling, sensory communication, open-ended questions and reflective answering d) Be able to apply the psychological aspects of health and fitness, which are influential to health and fitness behaviour change (e.g. behaviour modification, reinforcement, goal setting, social support and peer pressure etc.)
Knowledge:	a) Understand the importance of the mind body link b) Understand how an instructor can help all types of customer to have positive exercise experience c) Understand the value of first impressions d) Understand common barriers to exercise e) Understand how to move barriers, solve problems and enhance benefits of practicing physical activity f) Understand extrinsic and intrinsic reinforcement and motivation g) Understand the most important and effective behavioural strategies to enhance exercise and health behaviour (e.g. reinforcement, goal setting, social support, problem solving, reinforcement strategies, self-monitoring, etc.) h) Understand signs and symptoms of stress, the effects of stress on health and strategies for dealing with stress
Skills:	a) To be able to plan programme for personal physical and psychological well-being b) To be able to demonstrate adherence to healthy lifestyle c) To be able to create social support group to promote adherence d) Use the sensory representational system (Visual, auditory, kinesthetic) to optimize an individual's training session e) To be able to prevent relapses by planning, problem solving, identifying and changing negative thinking f) To be able to apply the basic cognitive-behavioural intervention such as shaping, goal setting, motivation, cueing, problem solving, reinforcement strategies, and self-monitoring

Module 5. **PREVENTION OF INJURIES**	**Learning outcomes:**
Competences:	a) Know what good posture is, why it is important and how to look for postural misalignments in your clients, carry out postural assessment b) Know what good training technique is, why it is important and know how to look for correct and incorrect technique c) Carry out correct involvement of the hip flexor muscle, Iliopsoas in core stability training d) Know when to refer clients to other professionals: GP's, Physiotherapists, Neuromuscular therapists, Consultants etc.

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Knowledge:	a) Understand how the body moves in space and is able to perform complex movements b) Understand what occurs during execution of strength and other exercises c) Understand the importance of workplace ergonomics of spinal health d) Understand the functional role of abdominal muscles in synergy with other muscles on the trunk, rib cage, pelvis and vertebral column and benefits of core strength e) Understand how to apply knowledge of muscle mechanics to exercise f) Understand the importance of warm up and cool down g) Understand common orthopedic problems with exercise and how they are treated h) Understand the importance of maintaining the correct degree of spinal curvature at the cervical, lumbar and thoracic vertebra regarding weight-bearing and biomechanical efficiency and for the transmission of stress, caused by impact, through the pelvic girdle, kinetic chain and muscle synergies i) Understand the high risk of shoulder joint displacement and increased scapular stabilising role of the surrounding synergistic musculature and ligaments j) Understand the potential for sprains and ligamentus damage increased by excessive non-functional movement during activities, such as running
Skills:	a) To be able to use warm up and cool down to prevent injuries b) To use your knowledge of posture to effectively design programmes for clients with musculoskeletal deviations c) To be able to point out symptoms and assist first aid of minor athletic injuries and illnesses d) To ensure that movement at all joints is kept in the correct planes throughout exercise performance for prevention of ligament strain and potential risk of injury (e.g. at shoulder joint, inappropriate biomechanics can place a strain on the rotator cuff muscles increasing the risk of osteoligamentus injury).

Module 6. **PROMOTING HEALTHY LIFESTYLE**	**Learning outcomes:**
Competences:	e) Know how to collect and interpret health screening and fitness assessment data f) Be able to use technological advancements that help clients increase their activity levels and stay motivated and focused g) Be able to monitor and interpret client data from a range of current applications h) Be able to assess clients' readiness to change behaviour i) Be able to facilitate goal setting and action planning j) Be able to build rapport k) Carry out motivational interviewing

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Knowledge:	a) Understand the importance of communication skills to effectively communicate and engage with clients b) Understand techniques used to support clients making lifestyle behaviour changes c) Understand how to evaluate and adapt to own communication styles d) Understand the cardiovascular, muscular and flexibility related benefits of physical activity and the significance of these benefits in reducing risk of disease e) Understand appropriate exercise activity required for health benefits and fitness benefits f) Understand the barriers and motivators to exercise participation g) Understand the exercise continuum for different levels of physical activity to include relative benefits h) Understand the health and skill related components of total fitness and their definitions
Skills:	a) Use different techniques used to effectively communicate and engage with clients b) Be able to establish rapport and engage clients in conversation about their health and fitness c) Understand how to create a positive environment that motivates and empowers clients, to meet their desired goals d) Be able to collect meaningful information about clients e) Be able to provide relevant information to clients f) Be able to close sessions in a way that encourages ongoing client motivation and goal achievement g) Be able to provide effective customer care: Communication, Body language, Negotiation h) Be able to select an appropriate behavioural goal and the suggested method to evaluate goal achievement for each stage of change

Module 7. PROGRAMME PLANNING AND DELIVERY	**Learning outcomes:**
Competences:	a) Define strength, understand the different types of strength and know when to and why to use each type in a client's training programme b) Develop the proper client assessment for your clients individual needs c) Know how to safely and effectively integrate the use of alternative environments into personal training sessions d) How to collect clients' health screening information and how to use health screening effectively e) Know the considerations for planning and delivering group personal training sessions f) Be able to provide motivation and encouragement g) Know how to collect feedback and to review client progress and satisfaction
Knowledge:	a) Understand the principles that underpin personal training and how personal training differs from other types of physical activity instruction

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	b) Understand the difference between planning supervised and unsupervised activities and how to build these into a timetable of sessions c) Understand the principles of progressive, safe and effective personal training programme design d) Understand the principles of periodisation and how they can be used effectively to meet client goals and needs e) Understand the repetition ranges and selection of exercises for strength, power, endurance and muscle hypertrophy f) Understand the range of heart rate training zone models (e.g. aerobic training zone, fitness zone) for developing aerobic and anaerobic capacity g) Understand the principles of training including specificity, progressive overload, reversibility, adaptability, individuality and recovery time h) Understand the principles of overload, specificity, progression and general adaptations and how they relate to exercise programming and a variety of individual wants, goals and needs i) Understand the scope and professional boundaries of personal training pre and postnatal women, older adults, etc. j) Understand the specific health and safety issues about delivering personal training in an environment not designed for physical activity instruction k) Understand the importance of feedback to promote adherence and client satisfaction l) Understand the importance of regular and planned communication strategy regarding the training adaptation process
Skills:	a) Recommend proper cardiovascular conditioning guidelines based on individual goals b) Be able use of short, medium and long-term (micro, meso and macro-cycles) and SMART goals c) Determine and analyse an individual's body composition d) Implement tests in order to determine target heart rate, cardiovascular endurance, flexibility, muscular strength, body composition and girth measurements e) Design and implement a comprehensive progressive periodisation programme for client f) Be able to design safe and effective personal training programmes and session plans according to client goals g) Be able to provide a session introduction that prepares the client for exercise h) Be able to instruct safe and effective exercise techniques i) Be able to monitor a client during exercise sessions j) Be able to use various methods of monitoring exercise intensity k) Be able to monitor client progress and adapt the programme accordingly

Module 8. **BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**	**Learning outcomes:**

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Competences:	a) Create business plan b) Know how to and when to close a sale using most effective sales closing techniques /assessed by quiz c) Manage marketing techniques and tactics d) Follow legal and ethical requirements for the security and confidentiality of client information e) Consider a range of employment opportunities in different sectors of industry
Knowledge:	a) Understanding the importance of release forms and insurances b) Understand the legal and professional requirements and responsibilities for personal training c) Understand health and safety and other important policies in the workplace d) Understand the requirements of a self-employed individual e) Understand how to set budgets and manage finances in a personal training business f) Understand the legal and professional requirements for the management of personal information and records such as Data Protection Act and confidentiality g) Understand the professional and personal importance of continuing professional development (CPD) h) Understand the importance of reflection and continuing professional development in helping to develop client health, fitness and motivation
Skills:	a) Establishing and managing a business b) Network with other professionals c) Be able to execute company swot d) Plan personal cpd and find opportunities for continuing professional development (CPD) e) Be able to plan and strategize to develop a successful personal training business f) Keep up to date with developments in the fitness industry

General Assessment Methods

- **Quizzes and Learning Experiences, online**
- **Case Study, online 30%**
- **Practical Demonstration, face to face 40%**
- **Multiple Choice Test, face to face [180 questions, limit = 4 hours, 1 Free Re-test] 30%**

Practical demonstration and case study are assessed by checklist, multiple choice test by correct answers, weighting of each section is 30%

Overall pass score is 75 %

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Theory exam

Theory exam 1 **Pass mark 75% (63 out of 90 marks)**

Theory exam 2 **Pass mark 75% (63 out of 90 marks)**

Case study

Client consultation

There are 8 marks available for client consultation. Learners must score a minimum of 6 marks in total to achieve a pass.

Food Diary analysis

There are 18 marks available for the food diary analysis. Learners must score a minimum of 14 marks in total to achieve a pass.

Planning a periodised programme

There are 28 marks available for the planning of a periodised programme. Learners must score a minimum of 21 marks in total to achieve a pass.

Assessed by assessment checklist

Practical demonstration

Planning resistance training session **Pass mark 75% (12 out of 16 marks)**

Personal training session **Pass mark 75% (23 out of 30 marks)**

Assessed by assessment checklist

Award in Personal training	maximum points	percentage
Multiple choice test 1	90	30
Multiple choice test 2	90	
Case study		30
Client consultation	8	
Food Diary analysis	18	
Planning periodised program	28	
Practical demonstration		40
Planning resistance training session	16	
Personal training session	30	
Total	280	100

Points	Grade
266-280	5
253-265	4
239-252	3
225-238	2
210-224	1
209 or under	Refer

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