Department for Education

# Sport and exercise instructor

## Level 2 Occupational Certificate subject content

## DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

## November 2026

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# Introduction

Occupational Certificates are technical qualifications that will be taken as part of the two-year occupational pathway. They are designed for students who want to prepare for a particular occupation in a school or college-based setting, before progressing into employment in a relevant level 2 role. Achievement of an Occupational Certificate is intended to demonstrate that a student is ready to progress into employment in occupations aligned to the qualification. They can then build towards full level 2 occupational competence through workplace experience, supported learning, apprenticeships, and other technical or professional training.

The content for the Occupational Certificate in Sport and Exercise Instructor is aligned to the following level 2 occupational standards and professional standard:

- ST0478 Community Activator Coach
- ST0390 Leisure Team Member
- CIMSPA Gym Instructor Professional Standard

Occupational Certificates comprise two components:

- broad introductory core content. This includes the knowledge and skills that are applicable across a range of occupations including key transferable skills that are needed to succeed, and
- occupation-specific content. This is aligned to an occupational standard and will deliver the knowledge and skills to enable the student to enter relevant level 2 employment and work towards full competence in their given occupation.

This document is divided into two sections:

**Introductory core content** - sets out the broad introductory core content which underpins all of the Occupational Certificates in this occupational route.

**Occupation-specific content** - sets out the occupation-specific content for each Occupational Certificate in this route.

Both sections are structured around learning outcomes and the associated knowledge, understanding and skills needed to achieve those outcomes. The subject content assumes no prior learning or qualification in the subject and introduces concepts from foundational level where required.

Learning outcomes in both sections can be delivered independently of each other or together in combination. There is no requirement to deliver the introductory core content first, or in isolation from the occupation-specific content. For example, providers may wish to start introducing students to the occupation-specific content in year 1, in tandem with core content, to support skills development and engagement.

**Awarding organisations must include the content from both the introductory core and the occupation-specific components in their final qualification specifications.**

## Qualifications

There will be one qualification in this occupational route:

- Level 2 Occupational Certificate in Sport and Exercise Instructor **- 720 GLH**

The Occupational Certificate in Sport and Exercise Instructor prepares students for employment in community sport, exercise, dry-side leisure and gym environments. Its content is aligned to the Community Activator Coach (ST0478) and dry-side Leisure Team Member (ST0390) occupational standards, and the CIMSPA Gym Instructor Professional Standard.

Students will develop the knowledge and skills to promote and support participation in sport and exercise, plan, deliver, adapt and review safe and inclusive activities, engage and support individuals and groups, work collaboratively with community organisations, and contribute to safe and effective leisure facility operations.

Successful completion also prepares students to undertake the Gym Instructor role, including participant consultation, screening, fitness assessment, induction, individualised exercise programme planning, instruction, monitoring and review, within the scope of professional practice.

Introductory core content guided learning hours (GLH) should normally be less than 50% of the total GLH for each qualification. The size of the core content for this Occupational Certificate is **320 GLH.**

The Department does not set mandatory prior learning requirements for Occupational Certificates. Providers may set their own entry requirements, including any GCSEs required.

# Subject content

## Guidance for awarding organisations on inclusion of content in qualification specifications

All content, unless specified otherwise, must be included in qualification specifications.

**Lists of content which start with a colon ':'**

This denotes that all the content in the list is compulsory and must be included in awarding organisations' qualification specifications.

**Lists of content which start with 'including'**

This denotes that all the content in the list is compulsory and must be included in awarding organisations' qualification specifications. The list is a minimum; awarding organisations can choose to add to the list. To ensure comparability between awarding organisations' qualification specifications in a subject, DfE will use this approach in limited instances where additional relevant content could reasonably be added without affecting the comparability of qualification specifications and assessments.

**Use of 'e.g.'**

This is used to exemplify what is meant by the content statement. It is used to ensure awarding organisations have a clear and consistent understanding of the term; to signal that the examples in use now may be superseded by more up-to-date examples; or where different examples could reasonably be included without affecting the comparability of qualification specifications and assessments. Awarding organisations can use the cited example, where it remains relevant and appropriate.

**Annexes A to F** form an integral part of the subject content and must be used by awarding organisations when developing qualification specifications. The definitions and any requirements expressly identified as mandatory within the annexes apply consistently across the relevant learning outcomes and content statements.

- Annex A - Scope of sport and exercise environments
- Annex B - Typical equipment, tools and resources
- Annex C - Links to occupational and professional standards: Introductory core content
- Annex D - Links to occupational and professional standards: Occupation-specific content
- Annex E - Co-teaching opportunities in Level 2 Occupational and Foundation Certificate subject content
- Annex F - Glossary of terms

Awarding organisations must ensure that the content, delivery and assessment of qualifications align with the requirements set out in these annexes. The annexes define the minimum expectations and must not be reduced.

**Organisational scenarios**

The DfE Subject Content will indicate where learning should be contextualised to organisational scenarios. The content will not specify the specific scenarios. Scenarios provided by awarding organisations within qualification specifications should be varied and inclusive, drawing on examples from a range of sectors, local labour markets and organisational contexts to avoid reliance on prior workplace experience or sector specific knowledge.

**Practical activity, simulation and equipment**

References to ‘sport and exercise’ in learning outcome titles identify the overall breadth of the content. Students must develop knowledge and understanding across both sport and exercise contexts. Where practical skills relate to sport and exercise activities, they may be demonstrated through sport, exercise, or a combination of both, unless otherwise specified in the relevant skills statements. Practical activities may support the demonstration of skills across more than one learning outcome where appropriate, provided that all distinct requirements are met.

Modelling or simulation may be used across learning outcomes where it serves a defined educational or occupational purpose but must not replace the practical application of specified skills using appropriate sport and exercise equipment and resources.

Practical activity may take place in realistic or simulated environments, in accordance with Annexes A and B, provided that the specified skills can be demonstrated safely and authentically.

Where a learning outcome requires direct interaction with participants, this must involve actual interaction with individuals or groups, which may include fellow students, family members, friends or others in an appropriate educational or realistic environment.

Awarding organisations must specify, and keep up to date, the equipment and resources students are expected to use, any permitted equivalents and the circumstances in which modelling or simulation may be used.

**Reference to legislation**

Where specific legislation is referred to and includes the name of the Act, e.g. ‘Health and Safety at Work Act’, awarding organisations must refer to the latest version of the Act in their specifications and keep references to the Act up to date.

## Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are provided for both the introductory core content and the occupation-specific content. They describe what students should know and be able to do after a period of learning.

We have set out, below each learning outcome, the knowledge, skills and behaviours, where appropriate, that a student will need to know and apply to achieve that outcome:

- knowledge refers to both knowledge and understanding. It relates to the theoretical facts, principles, concepts, and procedures that students should acquire
- skills refer to subject-specific and transferable skills needed to achieve a learning outcome

Students are expected to apply the full range of their knowledge, understanding and skills in order to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcome.

The scope of content for each learning outcome may vary; they are not expected to be delivered in the order specified in the subject content or be the same ‘size’ in terms of GLH. However, together they will align with the overall GLH for this qualification.

For each learning outcome, a rationale is provided for contextual explanation only. It is not part of the subject content that awarding organisations must include in their specifications.

## Co-teaching opportunities

The content identifies co-teaching opportunities between Occupational Certificates and Foundation Certificates through shared learning outcomes, common knowledge, understanding and skills and consistent terminology and language where appropriate. This mapping enables education providers and awarding organisations to more easily identify where the content could support co-teaching, while maintaining the distinct purpose and identity of each qualification. It can be used by awarding organisations when considering the design of qualifications, and by education providers when considering planning and delivering co-teaching, where this is appropriate within their settings. Annex E sets out the content mapping, illustrating subject content alignment across qualifications that may support co-teaching opportunities.

# 1. Introductory core content

## 1.1 Aims

This section sets out the knowledge and understanding, skills and supporting behaviours common to occupations in sport and exercise. This content underpins the broad introductory core. It is structured around essential occupational knowledge and transferable skills across community sport, exercise, dry-side leisure and gym occupations.

Sport and exercise covers a range of employment settings, such as community sport organisations, leisure centres, gyms, and other indoor, outdoor and community physical activity environments.

The purpose of this content is to provide students with the foundational knowledge, skills and supporting behaviours required to enter employment across a range of sport and exercise contexts. This includes supporting inclusive participation, communicating with participants, planning and delivering safe and inclusive activities, and applying professional working practices.

Across the introductory core, students should apply their learning to individual participants and groups of participants with differing needs and characteristics. These participants may include children, young people or adults with differing abilities, levels of experience and barriers to participation.

Qualification specifications must enable students to apply their knowledge, skills and understanding in practical and workplace-relevant contexts to achieve the following learning outcomes (LOs):

- LO1: Promote and support inclusive participation in sport and exercise
- LO2: Communicate effectively and inclusively to engage and support participants in sport and exercise
- LO3: Plan and prepare safe and inclusive sport and exercise activities
- LO4: Deliver, adapt and review sport and exercise activities
- LO5: Apply professional working practices in sport and exercise settings

Through these learning outcomes, qualification specifications should also support students to develop transferable skills[1] that are essential for employment and progression across the sector, including:

- communicating – listening to participants, using visual, oral, written and digital methods, building rapport and adapting communication to different participants

[1] Framework for transferable skills and work-related behaviours - GOV.UK

and stakeholders

- planning – identifying and sequencing steps, estimating time and resources, prioritising and coordinating sport and exercise activities, including planning individualised activities and programmes to meet participant needs and goals
- decision making – considering participant needs, safety requirements, evidence and advice to select and justify appropriate actions, including participant screening information, activity suitability and adaptations
- observing – monitoring participants, activities and environments to identify needs, responses, hazards and changing circumstances, including movement technique, activity intensity and individual responses to sport and exercise activity
- analysing – identifying patterns and relevant information in participation, wellbeing, feedback and activity information, including fitness assessments, participant progress and programme outcomes
- recording – accurately capturing, storing and maintaining participant, activity, programme and operational information, including confidential participant consultation, monitoring and progress records
- evaluating – reviewing activities, programmes, participant feedback and other evidence to identify strengths, assess effectiveness and recommend improvements, including participant progress and achievement of intended outcomes
- leading – supporting and motivating participants and others, taking responsibility and modelling appropriate behaviours, including providing guidance and supervision during sport and exercise activities
- critical thinking – considering information, different options and potential consequences when responding to participant and activity needs, including appropriate activity and exercise progressions, regressions, adaptations and referral decisions
- self-managing – managing time and responsibilities, reflecting on own practice, seeking feedback and setting personal development goals, including responsibilities for activity preparation, delivery and supervision, and continuing professional development within the sector

## 1.2 Learning outcomes

This section sets out the details of the learning outcomes that underpin the introductory core content for Occupational Certificates in this occupational route. Each learning outcome has been mapped to the knowledge, skills and behaviour statements in the relevant occupational standards. Annex C sets out for each learning outcome which knowledge, skills and behaviours have been covered.

## LO1: Promote and support inclusive participation in sport and exercise

See Annex A for Scope of sport and exercise environments.

See Annex B. for Typical equipment, tools and resources.

See Annex F. for Glossary of terms.

Rationale:

This learning outcome develops the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to promote and support participation in sport and exercise for health, wellbeing, enjoyment and positive lifestyle behaviours. Students identify participation opportunities and consider how interests, motivation, access, previous experiences and social factors influence involvement.

The emphasis is on understanding and responding to the needs of individuals and groups, helping them access suitable opportunities and supporting them in their continued participation.

At level 2, students use straightforward information about individuals and groups to recommend inclusive opportunities, explain benefits and encourage continuing participation within the limits of their authority. The outcome applies across a representative range of dry-side community, sport and exercise settings.

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must know and understand:

- principles of healthy lifestyles:
  - current UK physical activity recommendations
  - healthy eating guidance
  - adequate hydration
  - sleep and recovery
  - reducing sedentary behaviour
- the physical, mental and social benefits of participation in sport and exercise and associated indicators of wellbeing:
  - physical health and functioning
  - mood and confidence
  - enjoyment
  - social interaction and a sense of belonging
- factors influencing participation in sport and exercise:
  - confidence
  - motivation
  - prior experience
  - ability
  - disability
  - cultural influences
  - availability of provision

    - accessibility
    - transport
    - affordability
    - social support
- the influence of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and introductory behaviour-change stages on participation and sustained activity
- methods of encouraging and sustaining participation, through achievable participation goals, recognition of progress, positive reinforcement, signposting and support
- how organised and informal sport and exercise opportunities can meet the needs of participants of differing ages, abilities, interests, preferences and participation goals
- principles of inclusive participation, through the identification of personal and practical barriers and selection of suitable opportunities and support

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must be able to:

- identify suitable dry-side sport and exercise opportunities for individuals and groups, taking account of their interests, needs, abilities, motivations and barriers to participation
- promote the benefits of healthy lifestyles and participation in sport and exercise to individuals and groups with differing needs and characteristics
- use encouragement, recognition of progress and signposting to support participation and the development of positive activity habits
- support inclusive participation in response to identified personal and practical barriers within own level of authority

Supporting behaviours that are integral to the learning outcome but not expected to be assessed:

- empathetic
- inclusive
- enthusiastic
- respectful
- adaptable

## LO2: Communicate effectively and inclusively to engage and support participants in sport and exercise

See Annex A for Scope of sport and exercise environments

See Annex F for Glossary of terms

Rationale:

This learning outcome develops the general communication, interpersonal and customer-service knowledge and skills required across sport and exercise settings. It focuses on selecting and adapting communication, establishing rapport, welcoming participants, responding to routine enquiries and managing feedback.

Students apply these skills when communicating with participants in routine level 2 situations, identifying when matters require referral or escalation within their level of authority.

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must know and understand:

- verbal, non-verbal, written and digital communication methods used in sport and exercise settings, and their suitability for welcoming and orientating participants, providing activity information, responding to enquiries and communicating with participants
- communication techniques used when interacting with participants:
    - active listening
    - open and closed questioning
    - observing verbal and non-verbal responses
    - appropriate language and body language
    - checking understanding
- principles of inclusive communication in sport and exercise settings:
    - adapting language, pace, methods and communication styles to participant needs, abilities, disabilities, cultural backgrounds, confidence, experience and preferences
- ways of establishing professional rapport through:
    - appropriate greetings
    - respectful interaction
    - approachability
    - empathy
    - professional boundaries
- general customer-service principles:
    - welcoming and orientating participants
    - responding to enquiries
    - giving accurate information

    - signposting and escalating matters beyond own level of authority
- routine participant concerns and complaints and professional approaches to discretion, conflict reduction, constructive responses and appropriate referral
- methods of seeking, recording and using feedback on communication and service quality to inform improvements in participant engagement and service interactions
- sources of accurate information about sport and exercise activities, facilities and services, and how this information supports responses to participant enquiries

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must be able to:

- select and use verbal, non-verbal, written and digital communication for the participant, audience and situation
- adapt communication methods and language to differing needs, preferences and communication barriers
- establish rapport, welcome participants and provide accurate information about sport and exercise activities or services
- respond to routine enquiries and participant feedback, applying judgement when addressing straightforward concerns and signposting or escalating matters beyond own level of authority
- obtain and record service or communication feedback and suggest straightforward improvements within own role

Supporting behaviours that are integral to the learning outcome but not expected to be assessed:

- respectful
- empathetic
- confident
- approachable
- responsive

## LO3: Plan and prepare safe and inclusive sport and exercise activities

See Annex A for Scope of sport and exercise environments

See Annex B for Typical equipment, tools and resources

See Annex F for Glossary of terms

Rationale:

This learning outcome brings together the common requirements for planning and preparing safe, inclusive dry-side sport and exercise activities. Students establish aims, select activities, prepare resources and environments, identify hazards and follow safeguarding and emergency procedures.

Students plan safe and inclusive sport and exercise activities for individuals and groups with identified needs, abilities and goals. Working within defined levels of authority in routine level 2 situations, students select suitable activities, equipment and resources, establish appropriate session structures and timings, identify risks and make reasonable adaptations to support safe and effective participation.

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must know and understand:

- the purpose and key requirements of health and safety, safeguarding and equality legislation, relevant guidance and organisational policies within own level of authority
- safeguarding responsibilities: recognising concerns affecting children, young people and adults at risk, following reporting and escalation procedures, and knowing when to seek support
- hazard identification, risk assessment and dynamic risk assessment: assessing activity-related risk, selecting reasonable controls and recording and escalating concerns
- emergency and first aid arrangements: knowing how to obtain assistance, following procedures and working within own level of authority
- general principles of activity planning:
    - aims and objectives
    - participant needs
    - activity selection and resourcing
    - session structure, timing and sequence
    - safe participation
- key factors for consideration when selecting and adapting activities: participant age, needs, abilities, experience, confidence, accessibility and preferences

- principles of safe preparation and operation of dry-side sport and exercise environments and equipment: inspection, safe set-up, dismantling, storage, accessibility and reporting faults
- the purpose of routine pre-activity suitability and safety checks and when to seek advice or defer participation
- how activity alternatives, staffing arrangements and resources can be identified within an established activity plan and organisational arrangements

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must be able to:

- plan, document and prepare safe and inclusive sport or exercise activity sessions for individuals and groups that address differing participant needs and intended outcomes, specifying aims, sequence, approximate timings, participant considerations, resources, risks and appropriate routine adaptations
- identify hazards, select and apply appropriate risk controls and follow the relevant reporting and escalation arrangements
- follow safeguarding, equality, health and safety and emergency procedures within own level of authority
- prepare, check, set up, dismantle and store dry-side equipment and activity spaces safely, using appropriate manufacturer and organisational guidance
- identify factors affecting participant readiness and safe participation
- determine appropriate actions within own level of authority by seeking advice, adapting or deferring participation and referring activity concerns where required
- select suitable activities, resources and planned alternatives for participants with differing needs and abilities

Supporting behaviours that are integral to the learning outcome but not expected to be assessed:

- responsible
- observant
- reliable
- inclusive
- calm

## LO4: Deliver, adapt and review sport and exercise activities

See Annex A for Scope of sport and exercise environments
See Annex B for Typical equipment, tools and resources
See Annex F for Glossary of terms

Rationale:

This learning outcome develops practical skills to deliver, support, supervise, adapt and review structured, safe and inclusive sport and exercise activities.

Students use appropriate instruction and coaching approaches, observe participant responses and maintain safe and effective participation within their level of authority. Students adapt activities in response to participant needs and changing circumstances, provide constructive feedback and review activity outcomes against intended aims, participant feedback and their own practice.

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must know and understand:

- the stages of sport and exercise sessions and the purpose of warm-up and cool-down where applicable:
    - introduction
    - preparation
    - main activity
    - conclusion
    - review
- appropriate instruction and coaching approaches
    - explanations
    - accessible demonstrations
    - checking understanding
    - maintaining inclusive engagement
- methods of observing participation, monitoring general activity safety and engagement, selecting safe intervention points and responding to routine changes
- methods of adapting activity instructions, arrangements, equipment or levels of support in response to identified abilities, feedback and changing circumstances
- ways of providing clear, positive, timely feedback to participants on their activity and participation
- methods of reviewing activity effectiveness using observed delivery, participant response, feedback, intended objectives and own practice
- the purpose and requirements for accurately recording participation and session-review information:
    - participant responses
    - activity outcomes
    - feedback

- identified improvements

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must be able to:

- deliver, adapt and review planned sport or exercise activity sessions for individuals and groups that address differing participant needs and intended outcomes, within planned aims, safety arrangements and own level of authority
- use clear explanations, suitable demonstrations and appropriate coaching approaches for differing participant needs
- observe and supervise participants and activity arrangements to maintain safety, engagement and inclusive participation, responding to participant needs and routine issues
- adapt activity delivery, instructions, equipment or support in response to participant feedback and changing circumstances
- give appropriate, constructive participant feedback on activity involvement and identify when additional assistance is needed
- record activity information and review activity delivery, participant outcomes and own performance against planned aims to recommend straightforward improvements

Supporting behaviours that are integral to the learning outcome but not expected to be assessed:

- organised
- adaptable
- observant
- reflective
- encouraging

## LO5: Apply professional working practices in sport and exercise settings

See Annex A for Scope of sport and exercise environments

See Annex F for Glossary of terms

Rationale:

This learning outcome consolidates professional conduct, ethical practice, teamwork, information management, digital awareness, sustainability and personal development that are relevant across dry-side sport and exercise settings.

Students develop an understanding of professional responsibilities and apply appropriate working practices by maintaining professional boundaries, handling information securely, using digital technologies responsibly, working collaboratively and reflecting on their own performance and development within their own level of authority.

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must know and understand:

- confidentiality, data protection and secure information handling:
    - accurate recording of information
    - appropriate storage and access
    - appropriate information sharing methods
    - retention in accordance with organisational procedures
- general digital technologies used in sport and exercise settings for recording and information management
- responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-generated information:
    - checking reliability, accuracy and potential bias
    - protecting personal information
    - applying independent professional judgement
- general principles of accurate, ethical communication about activities and services and awareness of customer needs and organisational objectives
- basic commercial awareness:
    - the purpose of products and services
    - the relationship between customer experience, financial viability and operational sustainability
- environmentally sustainable working practices:
    - responsible resource use
    - safe waste management
    - reducing avoidable waste
    - caring for equipment
- continuing professional development, reflection, feedback and progression opportunities within the sport and exercise sector

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must be able to:

- work independently within an agreed level of authority and as part of a team, managing time, information and routine issues
- follow organisational and ethical procedures, maintain professional boundaries and refer matters beyond own level of authority to the designated person(s)
- record and handle participant or service information accurately and securely in line with legal and organisational requirements
- use digital communication and recording tools, checking the accuracy, confidentiality and appropriateness of information and any AI-assisted outputs
- provide accurate and objective information about activities, products, services and opportunities without misleading participants or exceeding own role and level of authority
- apply sustainable working practices through resource care and waste reduction
- reflect on own working practices, use feedback constructively and identify development opportunities

Supporting behaviours that are integral to the learning outcome but not expected to be assessed:

- professional
- reliable
- discreet
- reflective
- collaborative
- environmentally aware

# 2. Occupation-specific content

## 2.1 Aims

The occupation-specific component of each Occupational Certificate will address any additional knowledge, skills and supporting behaviours in the occupational standard(s) that are considered essential to prepare students for employment. A set of learning outcomes is provided for each Occupational Certificate in this route, and these complement the shared introductory core set out in the previous section.

All content from both the introductory core and the occupation-specific content must be included in the final qualification specification.

## 2.2 Learning outcomes

This section sets out the details of the learning outcomes and the underlying occupation-specific content for Occupational Certificates in this occupational route. Each learning outcome has been mapped to the knowledge, skills and behaviour statements in the relevant occupational and professional standards. Annex D sets out, for each learning outcome, which knowledge, skills and behaviours have been covered.

### 2.2.1 Occupational Certificate: Sport and Exercise Instructor

Learning outcomes 6, 7 and 8 form the occupation-specific content for this qualification.

## LO6: Support community participation, manage group dynamics and work collaboratively to deliver sport and exercise

See Annex A for Scope of sport and exercise environments

See Annex F for Glossary of terms

Rationale:

This learning outcome develops the additional knowledge and skills required to identify and respond to community participation needs, engage groups who may be underserved by existing provision, manage participant behaviour and group dynamics, and work collaboratively with organisations to support the coordination and delivery of sport and exercise activities within defined occupational responsibilities and level of authority.

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must know and understand:

- ways of identifying community groups and opportunities where activity provision or engagement could improve participation, with specific consideration of groups who do not currently use local facilities or provision
- ways sport and exercise provision can respond to identified participation barriers through accessible and affordable opportunities, consideration of transport limitations and support to build confidence and social connections
- ways of promoting inclusive sport and exercise opportunities through suitable outreach, signposting and targeted engagement
- ways of setting expectations for participation and conduct within own level of authority:
    - communicating activity aims and expectations for participation
    - explaining instructions, rules and boundaries
    - agreeing standards of behaviour and conduct
    - establishing routines and responsibilities appropriate to activities
- ways of recognising and responding to participant behaviours and applying positive group management techniques within own level of authority:
    - recognising signs of disengagement, disruption, disagreement and failure to follow instructions
    - responding to group interactions that affect participation, inclusion and the effective delivery of activities
    - using appropriate communication and reinforcing agreed expectations
    - seeking support or escalating concerns where behaviours cannot be managed
- ways of responding to routine community-session and event challenges, applying agreed procedures and escalating concerns outside own role

- the roles of local authorities, education providers, voluntary groups and other community organisations and how collaborative arrangements can support sport and exercise
- community activity and event tasks before, during and after delivery:
  - resources and roles
  - participant communication
  - straightforward coordination
  - follow-up
- methods for using suitable digital channels to communicate targeted messages to participant groups

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must be able to:

- identify an appropriate community participation opportunity and suggest inclusive approaches to engaging and supporting the target group
- apply positive group-management techniques and respond appropriately to routine participant behaviour and disengagement during dry-side activities
- assist with resolving routine community activity challenges, seeking support or escalating matters outside own authority
- work with relevant services and community organisations to coordinate straightforward dry-side activity or event arrangements and make effective use of resources
- prepare an accurate, appropriate targeted digital message about a community participation opportunity and check any AI-assisted content before use

Supporting behaviours that are integral to the learning outcome but not expected to be assessed:

- collaborative
- adaptable
- respectful
- organised

## LO7: Support safe, welcoming and effective sport and exercise operations

See Annex A for Scope of sport and exercise environments

See Annex B for Typical equipment, tools and resources

See Annex F for Glossary of terms

Rationale:

This learning outcome brings together the dry-side leisure and gym operating requirements and the Gym Instructor participant-readiness sequence. This includes operating safe environments, consulting with participants, screening and assessing readiness, and providing individual and small-group gym inductions. Students contribute to safe, welcoming facility operations and apply the consultation, screening, assessment and induction requirements appropriate to their occupational level of authority.

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must know and understand:

- routine dry-side leisure and gym operations:
    - relevant opening and closing procedures
    - access and security checks
    - equipment readiness
    - daily schedules
    - normal operating procedures
- the range of dry-side leisure and gym activities, facility products and services, how local demographics, customer expectations and needs influence the offer, and how staff contribute to service aims, customer experience and ethical member retention
- front-of-house and digital booking, attendance, customer and basic transaction systems:
    - accurate records
    - appropriate communication
    - procedures within own role
- safe assembly, dismantling, inspection, handling and storage of dry-side sport, leisure and gym equipment in accordance with manufacturer guidance and within boundaries of competence
- purposes and appropriate use of cleaning substances, cleaning equipment and personal protective equipment used in gym environments, and associated hazards and safe storage arrangements
- gym cleaning and routine maintenance schedules, manufacturers' instructions, daily checks, safe systems of work and the distinction between tasks within own role and those requiring trained maintenance personnel

- how cleanliness, accessibility, equipment organisation, clear signage and the presentation of gym facilities contribute to a welcoming, inclusive and positive environment for members and other users
- gym-specific health and safety requirements and duties for cleaning and operational tasks:
    - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)
    - Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
    - Personal Protective Equipment at Work (PPE)
    - Manual Handling Operations Regulations
    - electrical safety
    - facility security
    - fault isolation
    - signage
    - appropriate waste disposal
    - emergency arrangements
- the stages and professional boundaries of formal gym consultations with participants:
    - understanding exercise history
    - individual goals
    - preferences
    - fitness experience
    - wellbeing needs
    - informed expectations
- pre-exercise screening and informed consent:
    - recognised screening questionnaires
    - health commitment statements
    - contraindications
    - appropriate risk stratification
    - when to modify, defer, refer or seek medical clearance
- the use and limitations of appropriate routine health and fitness assessments:
    - questionnaires
    - resting heart rate
    - blood pressure
    - body mass index
    - waist circumference
    - waist to hip ratio
    - suitable submaximal cardiorespiratory fitness tests and muscular tests
- procedures for selecting, administering, recording, explaining and reassessing participant health and fitness measures within professional role boundaries, without making medical diagnoses
- the purpose, sequence and content of gym inductions for individuals and groups:
    - orientation
    - facility rules
    - gym-floor areas

    - booking services
    - emergency information
    - safe equipment familiarisation
- appropriate referral routes and professional role restrictions for participants whose health, circumstances or requirements exceed Gym Instructor competence, particularly specialist populations
- how participant consent, health, screening and assessment information must be documented and protected in accordance with legal and organisational requirements
- awareness of life-course changes to the musculoskeletal system in young people aged 13 to 18 years, antenatal/postnatal periods and older adults aged 50 and over, and when these may require modification, further advice or referral within Gym Instructor levels of authority
- the contribution of accessible, welcoming customer experiences to gym engagement, member retention, appropriate service promotion and the role of the instructor in maintaining customer confidence

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must be able to:

- welcome participants to sport and exercise facilities, identify the purpose of their visit, provide appropriate orientation and direct them to relevant activities, facilities or staff in accordance with organisational procedures
- follow dry-side facility opening, closing and routine operational arrangements within own role, carrying out appropriate access, safety and equipment-readiness checks
- assemble, dismantle, check, move and store dry-side sport or gym equipment safely in accordance with organisational requirements and manufacturer procedures
- use gym cleaning schedules and appropriate substances, equipment and personal protective equipment to complete routine cleaning and hygiene tasks safely
- identify and respond to gym-floor and dry-side facility hazards by following relevant isolation, signage, reporting, escalation and recording procedures
- check gym equipment and facilities for cleanliness, safe storage and basic serviceability, referring maintenance outside own competence
- use suitable booking, attendance or front-of-house systems to interpret straightforward customer information, identify customer needs, record information and respond accurately to routine enquiries within own level of authority
- conduct structured gym consultations to establish goals, exercise history, health information, participant needs and professional limitations
- undertake informed-consent and pre-exercise screening procedures, identify risks or contraindications and determine appropriate modification, deferral, referral or further advice within own scope
- select, carry out and accurately record routine health and fitness assessments appropriate to identified participant needs and within own level of authority:
    - resting heart rate
    - blood pressure
    - body mass index

    - waist measurements
    - cardiorespiratory fitness tests
    - muscular fitness tests
- explain results within level of authority and identify appropriate follow-up
- conduct safe, inclusive gym inductions for an individual and a group, adapting to participant needs and circumstances, orientating participants to the safe use of facilities, equipment and emergency arrangements
- maintain secure and accurate consultation, screening, assessment, induction and referral records following organisational procedures

Supporting behaviours that are integral to the learning outcome but not expected to be assessed:

- diligent
- discreet
- reassuring
- observant
- accountable
- welcoming

## LO8: Plan, instruct, monitor and review gym-based exercise programmes

See Annex A for Scope of sport and exercise environments

See Annex B for Typical equipment, tools and resources

See Annex F for Glossary of terms

Rationale:

This learning outcome establishes the specialist Gym Instructor competence to use participant information to plan individualised gym-based exercise programmes, demonstrate and supervise safe exercise technique, monitor participant responses, adapt training and review progress over an appropriate period.

Students develop and apply scientific knowledge at an introductory, functional level, with emphasis on understanding the principles and their practical application rather than detailed scientific mechanisms or theoretical analysis. This knowledge informs safe gym exercise selection, individualised programme planning, technical instruction, exercise intensity monitoring, progression and review within the defined level of authority and scope of practice of a level 2 Gym Instructor.

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must know and understand:

- structure and function of the circulatory and respiratory systems:
    - heart chambers
    - systemic and pulmonary circulation
    - blood vessels and blood pressure
    - airways and lungs
    - muscles of respiration
    - gaseous exchange
- structure and function of the axial and appendicular skeleton:
    - bone classifications and growth
    - joints and synovial joint types
    - posture and spinal alignment
- structure and function of the muscular system:
    - skeletal muscle structure and fibre types
    - principal anterior and posterior muscles
    - pelvic floor
    - muscle actions and joint movement
- structure and function of the nervous system and principles of muscle contraction:
    - the all-or-none principle
    - motor-unit recruitment
    - neuromuscular adaptations to exercise
- the digestive system:

  - alimentary canal, liver and pancreas
  - macronutrient digestion and absorption
  - the roles of amylase, proteases and lipases in breaking down carbohydrates, proteins and fats
  - dietary fibre and hydration
  - digestion timescales
- the energy continuum:
  - phosphagen, anaerobic glycolytic and aerobic energy systems
  - exercise intensity and duration
  - fatigue
- basic principles of human movement and applied biomechanics relevant to safe gym exercise techniques
  - alignment
  - movement speed
  - resistance
  - movement mechanics
- physiological responses to exercise:
  - short-term responses (immediate) to exercise on the main body systems
  - longer-term responses to exercise on the main body systems
- components of health-related and skill-related fitness, with specific reference to cardiorespiratory fitness and endurance and their relevance to exercise programming:
  - guidance on physical activity and exercise appropriate to gym instructing
  - differences between programming for general health and physical fitness
  - the role of evidence-based practice
- the purpose and stages of developing individualised gym exercise programmes using consultation and assessment findings, taking account of participant needs, SMART goals, exercise experience, equipment and available time
- training variables and principles:
  - frequency, intensity, time and type (FITT)
  - specificity
  - progressive overload
  - progression and reversibility
  - individuality and adaptation
  - recovery and programme variation
- exercise selection and sequence for warm-up, cardiovascular training, fixed- and free-weight resistance, bodyweight, functional, flexibility, mobility and cool-down activities, with consideration of muscle balance and appropriate recovery
- gym programme variables:
  - exercise modes
  - sets and repetitions
  - load and intensity
  - duration and rest
  - equipment choices
  - progressions and regressions

    - alternative exercise options
- recognised gym exercise training methods:
    - continuous, interval and fartlek cardiovascular exercise
    - single sets, basic sets and circuits
    - Delorme and Watkins 10RM
    - Berger 6RM and supersets
    - functional activity
    - static stretching or joint mobilisation
- safe exercise technique for cardiovascular machines, machine resistance, free weights, bodyweight, small equipment, functional exercise, flexibility and range-of-motion activities
- safe demonstration and technical instruction:
    - positioning and explanations
    - checking understanding
    - manual handling
    - safe lifting, passing and spotting
    - posture and alignment
    - range of movement
    - equipment operation
- methods of observing and supervising gym participants, correcting movement technique, providing appropriate instructional cues, monitoring safety and using progressions, regressions and corrective strategies
- reasons for modifying or temporarily deferring gym exercise and methods of checking and monitoring exercise intensity:
    - verbal pre-session checks
    - the talk test
    - rating of perceived exertion (RPE)
    - heart rate zones for monitoring moderate and high intensity exercise
    - benefits and limitations of the monitoring methods
- how wearable devices, activity-monitoring systems and other appropriate technologies can support gym programme monitoring, participant motivation and progress while protecting confidentiality
- the role of lifestyle factors, national healthy-eating guidance, motivation, adherence, behaviour change and goal adjustment in supporting participants within Gym Instructor scope
- common health conditions and the role of exercise in their prevention or management:
    - cardiovascular disease
    - stroke
    - type 2 diabetes
    - obesity
    - cancer
    - common musculoskeletal conditions, including back and neck pain, osteo-arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and osteoporosis
    - mental health conditions

    - appropriate referral boundaries
- how to conduct ongoing programme monitoring, repeat assessments and review meetings, evaluate outcomes against goals and participant feedback, and adapt safe progressive gym exercise programmes
- how to evaluate own instructional practice, participant performance, programme suitability, individual outcomes and the appropriateness of exercise content for the participant and environment
- gym-business aspects relevant to programme services:
    - employment status
    - liability insurance
    - licences and music
    - professional boundaries

To enable students to achieve this learning outcome, students must be able to:

- apply anatomy, physiology, human movement, biomechanics, energy demands and exercise responses to inform safe individualised gym exercise selection and programme design
- plan and document a safe individualised gym-based exercise programme for an identified participant using consultation and assessment information, specifying SMART goals, exercise selection, sequence, training variables, resource needs and progression and review arrangements
- demonstrate and explain technically correct gym exercises across warm-up, cardiovascular machines, resistance machines, bodyweight, free weights, functional exercises, flexibility, mobility and cool-down
- demonstrate safe equipment set-up, lifting, passing and spotting, posture, alignment, controlled movement and safe use of gym equipment
- instruct and supervise an individual and a group in gym exercise, through proactive and appropriately timed gym-floor engagement, positioning self to observe technique and providing clear, motivating and participant-specific feedback
- monitor gym exercise intensity and participant responses through appropriate verbal checks and methods such as RPE, the talk test and heart rate, taking action if exercise should be changed, deferred or referred
- adapt exercises and programmes using FITT, safe progressions, regressions, alternative exercises and corrective strategies to suit participant goals, movement and response
- support participants to continue agreed gym exercises safely without continuous direct supervision, while recognising limits and appropriate follow-up arrangements
- implement a gym programme over a period sufficient to monitor adherence and review progress against agreed goals, recording and evaluating participant responses and modifying the programme appropriately
- carry out regular programme reviews with participants, reassess progress against goals, obtain feedback and adjust exercise selection, intensity, motivational support and progression

- evaluate the effectiveness of the programme against agreed goals, participant progress and feedback, individual performance and own instruction and recommend appropriate straightforward changes
- use suitable gym technology and records to support programme planning, safe monitoring, participant communication and review while observing confidentiality obligations

Supporting behaviours that are integral to the learning outcome but not expected to be assessed:

- precise
- observant
- adaptable
- professional
- encouraging
- reflective

# Annex A: Scope of sport and exercise environments

This annex identifies the range of sport, exercise and physical activity environments relevant to the qualification, including community, leisure and fitness settings. It provides contextual guidance for the application of the knowledge and skills specified in the learning outcomes without introducing additional learning requirements.

## Types of sport and exercise environments

The following environments illustrate the range of indoor, outdoor and community settings relevant to the subject content. Students are not required to gain practical experience in every listed environment or undertake activities in an operational workplace.

## Purpose-built sport and exercise facilities

- Multi-purpose leisure centres, sports halls, gyms, fitness and exercise studios, functional training facilities and other indoor sport and activity facilities
- Specialist sporting venues, including natural and artificial playing surfaces, athletics facilities, racquet sport courts and golf facilities
- Sports clubs, community clubs and specialist activity venues, e.g. martial arts studios, dance studios, indoor climbing centres and recreational activity centres

## Gym and fitness environments

- Public, private and community gyms, health and fitness clubs and fitness facilities within multi-purpose leisure centres
- Gym floors and designated exercise areas, including cardiovascular training areas, resistance training areas, free-weight areas and functional exercise spaces
- Exercise studios and other designated spaces used for individual and group exercise, fitness activities and gym-based instruction

## Community and outdoor environments

- Public parks, recreation grounds, green spaces and outdoor play facilities and outdoor gyms
- Natural outdoor environments and dry-side outdoor activity centres used for walking, running, cycling, field sports and recreational activities
- Community venues such as village halls, community centres, school facilities and community health and wellbeing hubs used to deliver sport, physical activity and recreational programmes

- Temporary and flexible activity spaces, including pop-up sport and exercise venues, community event spaces and multi-use facilities adapted for physical activity

## The wider active environment

- Walking routes, cycling networks, trails and other infrastructure that supports active travel
- Public spaces designed to encourage everyday physical activity, including pedestrian areas and outdoor fitness equipment
- Streets, neighbourhoods and public realm spaces that enable participation in sport, exercise and active lifestyles

## Realistic learning environments and simulated activities for teaching and learning

The knowledge and skills specified in this subject content may be developed and applied in suitably equipped educational and realistic learning environments, including through classroom-based activities, structured simulations, role play, case studies and practical activities that reflect relevant occupational contexts.

Access to an operational sport or exercise workplace is not required, provided students can develop and demonstrate the specified occupational knowledge and practical skills safely and authentically.

Where specified skills require direct interaction with participants, this may involve fellow students, family members, friends or other individuals in an appropriate educational or realistic learning setting. Such interaction must be authentic, appropriate to the activity and sufficient to meet the requirements of the relevant occupational and professional standards.

# Annex B: Typical equipment, tools and resources

This annex identifies typical categories of equipment, tools and resources relevant to Sport and Exercise Instructor, covering community sport, fitness and gym-based exercise activities.

Awarding organisations must ensure that students have access to appropriate equipment, tools and resources sufficient to develop and demonstrate the knowledge and practical skills specified in the learning outcomes.

## Sport equipment

- Sport-specific balls, bats, racquets, sticks and other activity equipment
- Goals, nets, posts and target equipment
- Cones, markers, bibs and agility equipment
- Mats, hoops, skipping ropes and coordination equipment
- Inclusive and adapted equipment to support participation by individuals with differing needs

## Fitness and exercise equipment

- Cardiovascular and resistance training equipment
- Free weights and functional fitness equipment
- Resistance bands, exercise mats and flexibility equipment
- Equipment used for group exercise and circuit training
- Fixed-resistance exercise machines and cardiovascular machines suitable for gym-based exercise instruction
- Dumbbells, barbells and appropriate free-weight and functional exercise resources for demonstrating exercise technique
- Equipment and resources for demonstrating bodyweight, mobility, flexibility, exercise adaptations, progressions and regressions
- Fitness assessment equipment, including heart-rate monitors, blood pressure monitors, weighing scales, tape measures, perceived exertion scales and equipment for suitable submaximal fitness assessments

## Planning and delivery resources

- Session plans, activity plans and programme documentation
- Risk assessment and dynamic risk assessment documentation
- Participant registration, consent and attendance records
- Activity evaluation and participant feedback tools
- Gym participant consultation, pre-exercise screening, informed consent, health screening and referral documentation
- Fitness assessment and monitoring resources for measuring exercise responses and recording participant progress
- Individual gym exercise programme plans, goal-setting records, progress reviews and reassessment documentation

## Digital tools and technology

- Computers, tablets or mobile devices
- Timing and performance monitoring devices
- Digital communication and presentation tools
- Activity monitoring applications, wearable technology and digital systems for gym inductions, exercise programme planning, secure participant records and monitoring progress
- Digital booking, customer management and front-of-house systems used in sport and exercise facilities

## Health, safety and welfare resources

- First aid equipment
- Personal protective equipment appropriate to the activity
- Cleaning and hygiene equipment
- Accident and incident reporting documentation
- Safeguarding and emergency procedure documentation
- Gym cleaning, routine equipment inspection and maintenance schedules, manufacturers' instructions and associated reporting records
- Safety signage and resources for identifying, isolating and reporting equipment or environmental hazards
- Appropriate cleaning substances and safe handling, storage and waste-disposal resources for gym environments
- Pre-activity safety checklists, equipment inspection records and emergency communication resources

## Information resources

- Current legislation, guidance and codes of practice
- National Governing Body guidance and technical rules, where applicable
- Employer policies and procedures
- Health and safety, safeguarding, equality, diversity and inclusion guidance
- Accessible information formats and communication aids appropriate to participants with differing communication and accessibility needs
- Professional standards and guidance relevant to gym instruction
- Current sport and exercise guidelines, equipment manufacturers' instructions and recognised guidance on safe gym-based exercise

# Annex C: Links to occupational standards: Introductory core content

This annex lists all the learning outcomes for the introductory core content and the knowledge, skills and supporting behaviours from each occupational standard that each learning outcome addresses. Knowledge, skills and supporting behaviours (KSBs) have been selected for inclusion in the introductory core where they are common across occupations and essential for entry-level employment. Remaining KSBs, including those relating to specialist techniques, advanced processes, role-specific systems or contextual decision-making, are reserved for the occupation-specific component.

## LO1: Promote and support inclusive participation in sport and exercise

| Occupational standard | Reference | Knowledge | Skills | Behaviours |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community Activator Coach | ST0478 | K1, K2, K6, K9, K17 | S1, S2, S6, S9, S17 (wellbeing support) | B2 |
| Leisure Team Member | ST0390 | K7, K8 | | |
| CIMSPA Gym Instructor | CIMSPA Professional Standard | K5.1, K5.3 (shared elements) | S5.1, S5.3 (shared elements) | — |

## LO2: Communicate effectively and inclusively to engage and support participants in sport and exercise

| Occupational standard | Reference | Knowledge | Skills | Behaviours |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community Activator Coach | ST0478 | K7, K14 | S7, S14 | B4 |
| Leisure Team Member | ST0390 | K3, K8 | S2 | B4, B7 |
| CIMSPA Gym Instructor | CIMSPA Professional Standard | K1.1–K1.5 (general elements) | S1.1–S1.6 (general elements) | — |

## LO3: Plan and prepare safe and inclusive sport and exercise activities

| Occupational standard | Reference | Knowledge | Skills | Behaviours |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community Activator Coach | ST0478 | K3, K15, K16, K18, K20 | S3, S15, S16, S18, S20 | B1, B2 |
| Leisure Team Member | ST0390 | K4, K5, K12 | S3, S4, S5, S10 | B3 |
| CIMSPA Gym Instructor | CIMSPA Professional Standard | K2.4, K2.5, K8.1, K8.2 (common safety elements) | S2.3, S8.2 (common safety elements) | — |

## LO4: Deliver, adapt and review sport and exercise activities

| Occupational standard | Reference | Knowledge | Skills | Behaviours |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community Activator Coach | ST0478 | K4, K5, K21 | S4, S5, S21 | B1, B2 |
| Leisure Team Member | ST0390 | K12 | S11, S12 | B6 |
| CIMSPA Gym Instructor | CIMSPA Professional Standard | K7.3, K7.4 (general delivery elements) | S7.1, S7.2 (general elements) | — |

## LO5: Apply professional working practices in sport and exercise settings

| Occupational standard | Reference | Knowledge | Skills | Behaviours |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community Activator Coach | ST0478 | K12, K13, K19, K20 | S12, S19, S20 | B3, B5 |
| Leisure Team Member | ST0390 | K1, K2, K6 | S1, S6 | B1, B2, B5 |
| CIMSPA Gym Instructor | CIMSPA Professional Standard | K8.1, K8.2, K8.3 (general elements) | S8.1, S8.2 | — |

# Annex D: Links to occupational standards: Occupation-specific content

This annex provides details of how occupational standards map to the occupation-specific content for each Occupational Certificate.

For each Occupational Certificate in this route, this annex lists all the learning outcomes for the occupation-specific content and the knowledge and skills statements from each occupational standard that are covered by each learning outcome.

## LO6: Support community participation, manage group dynamics and work collaboratively to deliver sport and exercise

| Occupational standard | Reference | Knowledge | Skills | Behaviours |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Community Activator Coach | ST0478 | K2, K8, K9, K10, K11, K13, K22 | S2, S8, S9, S10, S11, S13, S22 | B1, B2, B3, B4 |
| Leisure Team Member | ST0390 | K12 | S10, S12 | B3, B6 |

## LO7: Support safe, welcoming and effective sport and exercise operations

| Occupational standard | Reference | Knowledge | Skills | Behaviours |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CIMSPA Gym Instructor | CIMSPA Professional Standard | K2.1–K2.7, K3.6, K4.1–K4.4, K8.2 | S2.1–S2.4, S4.1, S8.2 | — |
| Leisure Team Member | ST0390 | K1–K5, K6, K8, K11 (dry-side) | S1–S3, S5, S6, S9 (dry-side) | B1, B2, B4 |

## LO8: Plan, instruct, monitor and review gym-based exercise programmes

| Occupational/professional standard | Reference | Knowledge | Skills | Behaviours |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CIMSPA Gym Instructor | CIMSPA Professional Standard | K3.1–K3.5, K3.7–K3.12, K5.1–K5.3, K6.1–K6.2, K7.1–K7.4, K8.4 | S3.1, S5.1–S5.3, S6.1–S6.2, S7.1–S7.2 | — |
| Leisure Team Member | ST0390 | K11 (incorporated gym duties) | S9 (incorporated gym duties) | B5 |

# Annex E: Co-teaching opportunities in Level 2 Occupational and Foundation Certificate subject content

This mapping identifies areas where content for the Occupational Certificate aligns with content in related subjects and sector content. It is intended to highlight areas of content alignment that may support genuine, meaningful opportunities for shared delivery and co-teaching, whilst maintaining the distinct purpose and progression pathways of each qualification.

It can be used by awarding organisations when considering how to design qualifications, and by education providers when considering where co-teaching opportunities could be built into the delivery of their learning programmes.

**Content alignment across qualifications in the same subject area**

The following subject content areas may support meaningful opportunities for shared delivery and co-teaching between qualifications.

| Occupational Certificate content reference | Foundation Certificate content reference | Potential co-teaching focus | Knowledge and understanding | Skills | Qualification-specific application differences |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LO1 – Promote and support inclusive participation in sport and exercise | LO1 | Healthy lifestyles and inclusive participation | Physical, mental and social benefits of activity, participation needs, motivations and barriers, inclusive approaches and positive lifestyle behaviours | Recognise participant needs and barriers, communicate benefits and support informed participation choices | Foundation: understand and apply information to support informed choices about participation.<br>Occupational: actively promote and support participation by individuals and groups in sport and exercise activities. |

| Occupational Certificate content reference | Foundation Certificate content reference | Potential co-teaching focus | Knowledge and understanding | Skills | Qualification-specific application differences |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LO2 – Communicate effectively and inclusively to engage and support participants in sport and exercise | LO2, LO4 | Inclusive communication and participant engagement | Verbal, non-verbal, written and digital communication, barriers and adaptations, rapport, feedback and professional boundaries | Communicate clearly, adapt approaches to differing needs and respond appropriately to participants and feedback | Foundation: transferable communication to support participant needs and engagement in sport and physical activity.<br><br>Occupational: participant engagement, customer service, enquiries and communication within occupational responsibilities and level of authority |

| Occupational Certificate content reference | Foundation Certificate content reference | Potential co-teaching focus | Knowledge and understanding | Skills | Qualification-specific application differences |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LO3 – Plan and prepare safe and inclusive sport and exercise activities | LO3, LO4; LO5 (reporting) | Safe preparation, participation and risk management | Safeguarding, participant readiness, hazards and risk controls, equipment and environment checks, emergency arrangements and reporting responsibilities | Identify hazards, prepare safe environments and resources, make routine adaptations, and report or refer concerns within level of authority.<br><br>Plan and prepare sessions for individuals and groups that address differing participant needs and intended outcomes. | Foundation: preparation of safe sport and physical activity environments, equipment and resources, with supervised contributions to activity planning<br><br>Occupational: planning and preparing sport or exercise activity sessions for individuals and groups that address differing participant needs and intended outcomes, within safety and organisational requirements.<br><br>Foundation: supervised support.<br><br>Occupational: planning, delivery, adaptation and review within occupational authority |

| Occupational Certificate content reference | Foundation Certificate content reference | Potential co-teaching focus | Knowledge and understanding | Skills | Qualification-specific application differences |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LO4 - Deliver, adapt and review sport and exercise activities | LO1, LO4, LO5, LO6 | General activity instruction, monitoring and session review | Activity structure and sequence, inclusive instruction, observation of participant safety and engagement, adaptation of activities, participant feedback, accurate recording and review against intended outcome | Deliver and supervise straightforward activities, respond to participant needs, record session information and evaluate activity outcomes and own practice.<br>Deliver, adapt and review sessions for individuals and groups that address differing participant needs and intended outcomes | Foundation: supports the delivery and adaptation of sessions, contributing to planning and leading activities under supervision, and reviewing participation outcomes.<br><br>Occupational: deliver, adapt and review planned sport or exercise activity sessions involving actual participants, for individuals and groups that address differing participant needs and intended outcomes, within occupational level of authority. Specialist gym technique and programme review are addressed in LO8. Foundation: supervised support.<br><br>Occupational: planning, delivery, adaptation and review within occupational authority |

| Occupational Certificate content reference | Foundation Certificate content reference | Potential co-teaching focus | Knowledge and understanding | Skills | Qualification-specific application differences |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LO5 – Apply professional working practices in sport and exercise settings | LO2, LO5, LO6 | Digital information handling and reflective professional conduct | Professional conduct and boundaries, safe use of digital systems and AI, accurate and secure information handling, teamworking, sustainability, reflection and development. | Use information and digital methods appropriately, handle records securely, communicate relevant information, and identify development priorities | Foundation: transferable digital, recording and reflective skills.<br><br>Occupational: professional and information-handling requirements across dry-side sport and exercise settings; specialist facility transactions remain in LO7. |
| LO6 – Support community participation, manage group dynamics and work collaboratively to deliver sport and exercise | LO2, LO4 (limited underpinning) | Limited shared group interaction; distinct community outreach, behaviour and partnerships | Inclusive group engagement and general professional communication are shared. Community outreach, group dynamics and partnership coordination remain occupation-specific. | Adapt communication to participants, contribute appropriately to group activities and seek support when concerns arise | Occupational LO6: community outreach, response to group dynamics, community partnerships, activity coordination and targeted messages are additional to the common core. |

| Occupational Certificate content reference | Foundation Certificate content reference | Potential co-teaching focus | Knowledge and understanding | Skills | Qualification-specific application differences |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LO7 – Support safe, welcoming and effective sport and exercise operations | LO3, LO5 (limited) | Limited overlap: general safe preparation and participant readiness | General safe environments and information handling are shared. Dry-side facility operation, routine gym cleaning, consultations, screening, fitness assessments and induction are occupation-specific. | Apply general safety and communication knowledge to safe operations, conduct gym-participant readiness processes within defined role boundaries. | Foundation: general preparation, participant information and reporting.<br><br>Occupational: dry-side leisure operations and gym cleaning, participant consultation, consent, screening, fitness assessment and induction. |

| Occupational Certificate content reference | Foundation Certificate content reference | Potential co-teaching focus | Knowledge and understanding | Skills | Qualification-specific application differences |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LO8 – Plan, instruct, monitor and review gym-based exercise programmes | LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5 (limited underpinning) | Limited overlap: introductory communication and activity planning, specialist gym programme competence | General communication, safe preparation and review provide underpinning. Gym anatomy and physiology, exercise prescription, technical demonstration, intensity monitoring and programme review are distinct. | Plan an individualised gym programme, demonstrate and supervise safe technique, monitor exercise response, adapt training and review participant progression. | Foundation: broad transferable foundations only.<br><br>Occupational LO8: full technical gym programme planning, instruction, monitoring, adaptation and longitudinal review. |

# Annex F: Glossary of terms

**Activities –** Activities involving physical participation or movement, including sport, exercise, fitness and active recreation undertaken for health, wellbeing, enjoyment or recreation

**Active lifestyle –** A way of living that incorporates regular physical activity into everyday life to support physical, mental and social wellbeing.

**Applied biomechanics –** The application of principles of forces, movement, posture and joint mechanics to explain and support safe, effective exercise technique.

**Artificial intelligence –** Digital technologies that use data and computational models to analyse information, recognise patterns, generate content, make predictions or recommendations, and support human decision making. Outputs require appropriate human review, verification and judgement.

**Behaviour change –** Approaches used to encourage individuals to adopt and maintain positive health and physical activity behaviours.

**Berger 6RM method –** A resistance-training method based on an individual's six-repetition maximum (6RM), using progressively increasing loads across sets of six repetitions.

**Community engagement –** Working with individuals, groups and organisations to encourage participation, build relationships and support community needs.

**Consultation –** A structured discussion to establish a participant's exercise goals, preferences, experience, relevant health information and support needs before gym-based activity.

**Contraindication to exercise –** A condition or circumstance indicating that a proposed exercise or assessment should not proceed, or requires modification, further advice or referral under recognised procedures.

**COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) –** The requirements for identifying and controlling risks from hazardous substances, including relevant cleaning chemicals used in gym facilities.

**CPD (Continuing Professional Development) –** The ongoing process of maintaining and developing knowledge, skills and professional workplace readiness through learning, training, reflection and experience throughout a person's career.

**Customer service –** Responding appropriately to participant or customer enquiries, feedback and straightforward complaints, providing information and signposting or referring matters outside own level of authority.

**DeLorme and Watkins 10RM method –** A progressive resistance-training method based on an individual's ten-repetition maximum (10RM). It typically involves three sets of ten repetitions, using approximately 50%, 75% and 100% of the individual's 10RM load, with the resistance increasing across the sets.

**Digital technology –** Digital devices, systems and applications used to communicate, record information, manage activities and support service delivery.

**Dynamic risk assessment –** The continuous process of identifying, assessing and responding to changing risks during activities or sessions.

**Exercise adherence –** The extent to which a person continues to participate in an agreed exercise programme or routine over time.

**Exercise intensity –** The degree of effort required during physical activity, which may be monitored using suitable methods such as perceived exertion, the talk test or heart rate.

**Exercise progression and regression –** Adjusting an exercise, its load, complexity or demands to increase (progression) or reduce (regression) difficulty in response to an individual’s needs and safe technique.

**Fartlek –** A form of cardiovascular training that involves varying exercise speed and intensity throughout a continuous activity, alternating between faster and slower periods without fixed work and recovery intervals.

**Fitness assessment –** An appropriate measure or observation of relevant fitness or health-related indicators used to inform exercise planning and review within professional role boundaries.

**FITT principles –** The training variables frequency, intensity, time and type, used to structure, monitor and adjust exercise programmes.

**Group –** Three or more participants taking part together in a sport, exercise or physical activity session.

**Gym induction –** An introduction to a gym facility and its safe use, including relevant rules, orientation, equipment instruction and emergency information, tailored to an individual or group.

**Gym-based exercise programme –** A structured sequence of gym exercises and sessions selected for an individual’s goals and needs, incorporating relevant safety, training, monitoring and review considerations.

**Inclusion –** Creating equitable opportunities for individuals to participate by recognising and responding to differing needs, abilities, backgrounds and circumstances.

**Inclusive practice –** Planning and delivering activities that enable individuals to participate by recognising and responding appropriately to differences in age, ability, background, culture, beliefs and personal circumstances.

**Informed consent –** Agreement given voluntarily by a participant after they have received and understood sufficient information about the nature, purpose and potential risks of an activity, assessment or other provision.

**Level of authority –** The limits within which an individual is authorised to make decisions, take action and exercise judgement in their role, in accordance with organisational procedures, professional standards and their competence. Matters beyond these limits must be referred or escalated to an appropriate person.

**Participant –** Any individual, including a child, young person or adult, taking part in sport, exercise or physical activity or accessing associated provision, regardless of age, ability or experience. This may include customers where applicable.

**Participation –** Taking part in sport or exercise. Participation may involve individuals or groups engaging in indoor or outdoor activities that support health, wellbeing, enjoyment or personal development.

**Partnership working –** Collaborative working between organisations, professionals and community groups to improve participation and outcomes.

**Pre-activity screening –** The collection and consideration of participant information before an activity to identify factors that may affect safe participation and whether further advice, support or referral is required within own level of authority.

**Physical activity –** Any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that requires energy expenditure, encompassing exercise, sport, active recreation, active travel and everyday activities.

**Pre-exercise screening –** The collection and consideration of relevant health, activity and risk information before exercise or fitness assessment to establish readiness and identify any need for modification, deferral, signposting or referral.

**Professional boundaries –** The limits of appropriate professional relationships and conduct that protect the safety, wellbeing and trust of participants, colleagues and organisations.

**Professional practice –** Applying knowledge, skills, conduct and judgement in accordance with legal and ethical responsibilities, professional standards and the requirements of the activity or setting.

**Professional scope of practice –** The activities and decisions a person is qualified, competent and authorised to undertake within their role, including recognising when additional expertise or referral is required.

**Risk assessment –** A structured process of identifying hazards, considering associated risks and determining appropriate measures to reduce or control those risks.

**Risk stratification –** Using recognised criteria or procedures to identify levels of exercise-related risk and determine appropriate action within the instructor's scope of practice; it does not constitute medical diagnosis.

**Routine –** Basic, familiar activities or tasks carried out by following established procedures, recognised methods or instructions. These involve predictable requirements and are undertaken within clearly defined responsibilities, with limited need for independent decision-making.

**Safeguarding –** Responsibilities and actions to protect children, young people and adults at risk from harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation, including recognising, recording and reporting concerns appropriately in accordance with organisational procedures.

**Session plan –** A structured plan outlining the aims, activities, timings, resources, safety considerations and evaluation methods for a sport or exercise session.

**SMART goals –** Goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound, used to guide and review progress.

**Specialist populations –** Individuals whose age, health status or circumstances may require additional considerations, specialist qualifications or referral beyond the scope of a Gym Instructor. These may include young people aged 13 to 18 years, individuals during antenatal and postnatal periods, older adults aged 50 and over, and individuals with specific health conditions or additional exercise needs.

**Sport and exercise environment –** Indoor, outdoor, natural, built and community settings in which sport and exercise are delivered.

**Straightforward –** Clearly defined and accessible information that can be understood and interpreted using established knowledge, methods or procedures. The information does not require complex analysis or specialist judgement but may require basic interpretation to support decisions or recommendations.

**Supersets –** A resistance-training method involving two exercises performed consecutively with little or no rest between them, followed by an appropriate recovery period.

**Sustainability –** Environmentally, socially and economically responsible approaches that support long-term sport or physical activity provision.

Department for Education

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