HIGHER NATIONAL ✕ SQA

Next Generation Higher National Educator Guide

Higher National Certificate in Physical Activity and Health

Group award code GT6A 47

Valid from session 2024 to 2025

Prototype educator guide for use in pilot delivery only (version 0.1) September 2024

This guide provides detailed information about the group award to ensure consistent and transparent assessment year on year.

This guide is for assessors and lecturers and contains all the mandatory information you need to deliver and assess the group award.

This edition: September 2024 (version 0.1)

Contents

Group award overview

Introduction

This guide:

♦ assists centres to implement, deliver and manage the group award

♦ provides a guide for new staff involved in offering the group award

♦ informs course managers, teaching staff, assessors, learners, employers and higher education institutions of the aims and purpose of the group award

♦ provides details about the range of learners that the group award is suitable for and the progression opportunities

Purpose of the group award

This qualification title Higher National Certificate (HNC) Physical Activity and Health reflects the changes in a society that has begun to understand the health, economic and social benefits of leading a healthy and active lifestyle. The qualification helps learners to enter an industry that has a wide range of employment opportunities in Scotland and globally.

The mandatory units focus on the foundational knowledge for a variety of roles in the physical activity and health sector. The qualification focuses on the role of exercise practitioner, but the knowledge and skills can also be transferred and applied to roles such as gym instructor and group exercise instructor. The HNC also supports learners who want to carry out further study to become a personal trainer or work in exercise referral.

The qualification covers underpinning knowledge of anatomy and physiology, training principles, health promotion and behaviour change, nutrition, and working in the physical activity and health industry. Learners develop the necessary skills to become diligent exercise practitioners, including soft skills such as communication and active listening. The optional units of the HNC allow centres to maintain local partnership agreements and deliver an HNC that meets the needs of employers and/or partners.

The qualification promotes a digital-by-design approach and incorporates the development of meta-skills, academic skills and sector-specific knowledge around health and physical activity, to equip learners for future employment or further study.

Structure

HNCs are designed at SCQF level 7 and consist of 120 SCQF credit points. HNCs must incorporate at least 80 credit points (10 SQA credits) at SCQF level 7.

HNC and HND are stand-alone qualifications of 15 SQA credits each to support flexibility and increase opportunities for adult learners who return to education and training.

The HNC includes opportunities for learners to develop meta-skills to support the active development of professional practice and behaviours, and to give them self-awareness and understanding that they can use these meta-skills to increase and discuss their employability. This is embedded in the Exercise Practitioner unit.

In keeping with the Next Generation: Higher National (NextGen: HN) Design Principles, there are fewer mandatory units in HNC Physical Activity and Health and they are larger in size. Previous iterations included eight mandatory units that had 43 assessments. This prototype award includes five mandatory units and reduces assessment load. Approaches to grading have also been considered to accommodate the Design Principles.

HNCs contain 15 credits that can be used flexibly to increase opportunities for learners returning to education. Refer to the 'Meta-skills' section of this guide for more information.

Framework

HNC Physical Activity and Health requires learners to achieve five mandatory units and three optional units:

Mandatory units

Unit code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J6E9 47	Exercise Practitioner 1	3	24	7
J6E8 47	Training Principles for Exercise	3	24	7
J6E7 47	Anatomy and Physiology for Exercise and Human Movement	2	16	7
J6EA 47	Health Promotion, Behaviour Change and Nutrition	2	16	7
J6T2 47	Preparing to Work in the Physical Activity and Health Industry	2	16	7

Optional units

Unit code	Unit title	SQA credit	SCQF credit points	SCQF level
J82R 47	Research Skills	1	8	7
J7X0 47	Strength and Conditioning 1	1	8	7
J6EE 47	Psychology of Physical Activity	1	8	7
J6EF 48	Organising and Delivering a Physical Activity or Health Event	1	8	8
J6EG 47	Flexibility Training	1	8	7

The mandatory units in HNC Physical Activity and Health consist of 96 credit points (12 SQA credits) at SCQF level 7. Centres must ensure learners carry out an additional 24 credit points (3 SQA credits) to achieve their HNC qualification.

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Aims of the group award

Physical activity is an essential feature of our physical and mental well-being. It also has social and societal benefits, which are becoming increasingly recognised by, and integrated in, public health policy. Greater demand is being placed upon industry to have an appropriately knowledgeable, skilled and adaptable workforce.

HNC Physical Activity and Health aims to address these needs and broaden the range of services learners can provide when qualifying from this HNC. This includes building on existing pathways into the physical activity and health industry. We have extended the qualification's reach into public health through the Scottish Government's 'A More Active Scotland: Scotland's Physical Activity Delivery Plan' and the World Health Organization's Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018–2030.

The qualification aims to generate a network of knowledgeable and skilled practitioners who can draw on meta-skills to adapt to the needs of their employers, industry and clients.

General aims

The general aims of this qualification are for learners to:

1   Develop critical and evaluative thinking, and the ability to manage and absorb large amounts of information.
2   Develop problem solving.
3   Develop self-directed and self-reflective learning.
4   Develop the ability to be flexible and to work co-operatively in a team structure.
5   Develop transferable skills, such as study and research skills, presentation techniques, and personal effectiveness.
6   Enable progression in the SCQF, including progression to higher education.
7   Have opportunities for career planning and enhancing their employment prospects.
8   Develop their meta-skills profile.

Specific aims

The specific aims of this qualification are for learners to:

1   Develop a sound understanding of the principles of anatomy and physiology in relation to exercise and human movement.
2   Develop a sound understanding of the role that nutrition plays in leading an active, healthy lifestyle.
3   Develop an awareness of the interdisciplinary nature of physical activity and health and how this can positively impact the health and well-being of individuals and communities.
4   Develop client screening skills in an exercise and health setting.
5   Increase their awareness of legislative changes and government initiatives in physical activity and public health.
6   Develop and apply transferable exercise skills to analyse, plan and evaluate appropriate exercise regimes for a variety of clients.
7   Develop an evidence-based approach to programme planning.
8   Develop working practices to the current accepted professional standards for gym instructor practitioner, group exercise instructor and health navigator.

Group award structure

Group award code: GT6A 47 (120 SCQF credit points)

HNC Physical Activity has five mandatory units (96 SCQF credit points) and three optional units (24 credit points).

The following Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) professional standards are embedded:

- ♦ gym instructor practitioner
- ♦ group exercise instructor practitioner
- ♦ health navigator

This qualification is jointly certificated with SportScotland and CIMSPA.

Who is this group award for?

This qualification is for learners who want to develop their knowledge and skills to gain employment in the physical activity and health sector or articulate to university studies. It offers an opportunity for school leavers, adult returners and learners progressing from other lower-level programmes to gain an understanding of the key concepts of working in the physical activity and health sector, to support clients in their journey to become more active and improve their health. Learners develop their knowledge and skills through subject knowledge, working in a practical setting and developing a range of core, essential and transferable skills, including academic skills.

Centres must ensure learners undertaking the qualification are at least 16 years old before the course start date due to student public liability insurance requirements. You should note that 16- to 18-year-olds may need to be supervised in the workplace once they have achieved the qualification.

Recommended entry	Progression
Entry to this group award is at the discretion of your centre. Learners would benefit from having attained the skills, knowledge and understanding required by one or more of the following, or equivalent qualifications and/or experience: ♦ Highers in one or more of the following subject areas: — English — Biology (including Human Biology) — Physical Education — Psychology ♦ National Qualifications at SCQF level 6 in Exercise and Fitness ♦ National Progression Award (NPA) in sports at SCQF level 6	Learners can progress to: ♦ other qualifications in physical health and activity or related areas ♦ further study, employment and/or training ♦ different articulation pathways to undergraduate degree programmes in universities. Learners can progress to further study, often directly to degree programmes (with some advanced entry depending upon local agreements) in subjects such as: — Sport and Physical Activity and Health — Physical Activity and Health — Sport and Exercise Science — Strength and Conditioning — Food Nutrition and Human Health — Sport Studies and Development Learners can move into employment in the physical activity and health industry. The following are examples of some occupational areas: ♦ gym instructor practitioner ♦ group exercise instructor practitioner ♦ community activator ♦ health link worker ♦ health champion ♦ health coach ♦ health trainer These job roles or titles may not be consistent across the UK.

Recognising prior learning

SQA recognises that learners gain knowledge and skills through formal, non-formal and informal learning contexts.

It is unlikely that a learner would have the appropriate prior learning and experience to meet all the requirements of a full group award.

You can find more information and guidance about the recognition of prior learning on SQA's website.

Articulation and/or progression

Learners who complete HNC Physical Activity and Health can progress to the Higher National Diploma (HND) in Physical Activity and Health (year 2) at SCQF level 8, or articulate into advanced entry university degree programmes (depending on local agreements) in the following subject areas:

♦ Sport and Physical Activity and Health
♦ Physical Activity and Health
♦ Sport and Exercise Science
♦ Strength and Conditioning
♦ Food Nutrition and Human Health
♦ Sport Studies
♦ Sport Development

We recommend that learners who have completed the HNC in Physical Activity and Health also have a formally recognised First Aid at Work qualification.

Professional recognition

CIMSPA endorsement is an integral feature of the qualification.

The HNC in Physical Activity and Health is mapped to the following Professional Standards on the CIMSPA standards framework:

♦ gym instructor practitioner
♦ group exercise instructor practitioner
♦ health navigator

Learners can attain CIMSPA membership when they successfully complete the HNC. CIMSPA employer partners recognise the value in endorsed qualifications, as they meet industry standards, and provide confidence that learners are arriving with the appropriate knowledge and skills.

The HNC in Physical Activity and Health is also a gateway qualification to lifelong learning and a long-standing career in the industry. Learners can progress to 'professional' or 'chartered status' as they continue to build on their qualification with continuing professional development (CPD), and their experience in employment.

Credit transfer arrangements

Centres can make decisions about transferring credits. They can transfer credits if the subject-related content of the units is broadly equivalent. Centres should consider the currency of a learner's achievement before transferring credit.

Meta-skills

Meta-skills are higher-order skills that support the development of other skills and promote success in any context. They enable learners to respond to professional challenges and opportunities by reflecting on, developing, applying and adapting industry skills and sector knowledge.

Our new Higher National Qualifications are developed with meta-skills at their core. Meta-skills complement the industry and sector-specific content of the qualifications. They provide a framework for learners to complete personal development aligned to professional practices.

Throughout the qualifications, learners develop meta-skills while studying industry and sector-specific content. You can integrate meta-skills into contextualised teaching activities and include them in integrated and holistic assessment approaches.

The 21st century skills and meta-skills learning, teaching and assessment model focuses on how we can use skills to respond to societal, economic and industry drivers and change. Meta-skills frameworks vary, but they share an approach that emphasises individualistic, context-based skills development with reflective practice and localised definitions.

Skills Development Scotland developed a model of meta-skills in response to the concept of Industry 4.0 (or the 'fourth industrial revolution'). In this model, they identify 12 meta-skills that help learners adapt to changes to industry, job roles and society expected as a result of technological advances and global trends. Developing these meta-skills supports learners as they prepare for a constantly evolving future.

The 12 meta-skills are grouped into three categories: self-management, social intelligence and innovation.

Self-management	Social intelligence	Innovation
Focusing	Communicating	Curiosity
Integrity	Feeling	Creativity
Adapting	Collaborating	Sense-making
Initiative	Leading	Critical thinking

Adapted from: [Skills 4.0: a skills model to drive Scotland's future](#), Centre for Work-based Learning in Scotland, (2018).

You should:

♦ make learners aware that meta-skills are generic and transferable across many different contexts

♦ support learners to focus on the meta-skills that they find most relevant by encouraging an individualised, active learning approach that relates to the industry and sector contexts of the qualification

♦ help learners to understand key meta-skills for their industry or sector and any other personally important meta-skills, and set development goals for these

♦ encourage learners to focus on reflective practice

None of the meta-skills are mandatory.

Learning and teaching

You can introduce meta-skills to learners as tools they can use in response to real-world challenges and opportunities. At SCQF level 7, you should use terminology from the Skills 4.0 model, but it is important that you develop a shared understanding with learners about meta-skills and what they mean to them, both individually and in the context of coursework, projects and sectors.

You should embed meta-skills in learning and project tasks as a context for planning, practice and reflection. You should encourage learners to be self-aware, set active goals and monitor their progress.

The process of developing meta-skills is not linear and you should make learners active participants in their learning. At the start of the process, you should introduce meta-skills to learners and explore the concept of self-assessment with them. You should set goals and make development and evaluation plans together. The process should become cyclical, with reflective practice informing new self-awareness, goal setting and review.

Many traditional learning and teaching activities used to develop industry or sector-specific skills, knowledge and understanding also support the development of meta-skills. You can map these in course materials and resources and during learning.

Meta-skills are central to successfully engaging with and completing assignments and projects. You should encourage learners to plan how they will use and develop meta-skills in their coursework and to reflect on their success and future goals.

The role of the coach, mentor or facilitator is key to helping learners understand, develop and reflect on their own meta-skills and those central to course activities, assessment projects and their target industry or sector. You and any employer partners or guest speakers could guide learners by taking on a coaching and mentoring role.

In this role, you should introduce learners to the fundamentals of reflective practice. You could use several models of reflective practice. You do not need to use a theoretical perspective. Any reference to these models should support learners' understanding of the nature and value of reflective practice in self-understanding and making change.

Introducing reflective practice can support learners' personal development and goal setting. Frequent formative peer-to-peer, assessor, client (if appropriate) and group reflection activity can support learners through reflective practice.

Learners can focus on any meta-skills appropriate to them and their context. However, learning and teaching should also facilitate individual development. Learners have individual strengths and areas for development and they do not have to reach a particular level in relation to meta-skills. Coursework and projects provide the context for development appropriate to the SCQF level. Within these contexts, the process of development is important. You should create a clear learning plan with each learner to provide evidence of their development.

You can create descriptions of abilities and skills that relate to meta-skills with your learners. These can come from self-profiling, exploring the industry and sector, and discussion with peers and employers. You should consider the meta-skills needed to complete coursework and meet personal goals to set a context for reflection.

Exploring learning and working styles, personality traits and preferences, personal profiling, and self-assessment tools can help learners to develop an understanding of their strengths and areas for development.

You can use case studies and scenario-based activities to demonstrate the value of meta-skills and how they can be applied. You can provide opportunities for peer reflection. A group of learners could share experiences and reflections about how to apply meta-skills in the context of their coursework. You could adopt the role of facilitator to draw learners' attention to situations where meta-skills were or could have been applied.

Reflective discussions can focus on how and where meta-skills are being developed. Your discussions with learners could include positive recognition and guidance on future development based on previous performance. As learners progress, you could introduce industry content that requires skills like problem recognition and problem solving, both of which combine multiple meta-skills.

You can deliver the knowledge and skills for practical aspects of projects in sequence. However, learners benefit from learning and teaching that integrates meta-skills with project planning and development. This approach supports learners to engage in reflective practice throughout the project and develops their self-awareness and an appreciation for continuous learning. It also maximises your opportunities to support, coach and mentor learners through their projects.

Learning for Sustainability

Context

The United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by the UK in 2015, has shaped the development of internal and national sustainability policy. It sets out the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs), which are central to the Scottish Government's [National Performance Framework](#). Learning for Sustainability (LfS) is a commitment to embedding the SDGs in Scottish education.

In line with this, SQA is committed to incorporating the skills, knowledge, understanding and values of LfS within all new and revised qualifications.

LfS combines:

♦ education for sustainable development (ESD)
♦ global citizenship
♦ outdoor learning

ESD is the internationally used term for sustainability education. LfS has a broader remit; however, the terms are largely interchangeable. ESD tends to be used by colleges and universities, while LfS is usually used in schools. Both focus on a broad range of social, economic and environmental themes and approaches across all levels of education. SQA uses LfS as an umbrella term.

LfS is designed to nurture a generation of learners who know the value of the natural world and are committed to the principles of social justice, human rights, global citizenship, democratic participation and living within the ecological limits of the planet. It aims to respond to global challenges by developing learners' skills, knowledge, understanding and values relating to sustainability so they can interact with the world in a socially responsible way.

LfS is more than the sum of its parts; it is about building learners' capacity to deal with the unpredictable challenges facing our rapidly changing world. It encourages transformational change through learning, by which learners can critically analyse, communicate and collaborate on complex social, environmental and economic challenges. This gives learners increased confidence, opportunities to develop a range of meta-skills, and enhanced motivation and readiness to learn.

Learning for Sustainability in Next Generation Higher National Qualifications

NextGen: HN qualifications have been developed with sustainability as a core component.

All NextGen: HN learners should exit their qualification with:

♦ a general understanding of sustainability and the SDGs
♦ an understanding of subject-specific sustainability issues, how these relate to the SDGs, and potential improvements
♦ the confidence to apply their knowledge and skills in the next stage of their lives

Central to these aims is a need for familiarity with both the SDGs and the concept of sustainability (which is the need to ensure a balance between economic growth, environmental stewardship and social well-being). Knowledge and understanding of current industry practices and behaviours, and consideration of how these could be made more sustainable and contribute towards the SDGs, are integral in developing young people to be responsible and empowered citizens who are able to contribute to building a socially just, sustainable and equitable society.

With this in mind, sustainability is embedded as an outcome in Exercise Practitioner 1.

By completing this outcome, learners develop skills, including the abilities to:

♦ assess their own knowledge and understanding of sustainability and the SDGs
♦ review unit content against the SDGs to identify a sustainability-related issue
♦ apply knowledge and understanding of sustainability and the SDGs to propose improvements

Any of the SDGs can be covered; there are none that are mandatory.

Grading

Please see the Grading Pack for this qualification for more information on grading.

Learners who pass NextGen: HN qualifications receive one of the following grade outcomes for the qualification as a whole:

♦ Achieved with Distinction

♦ Achieved with Merit

♦ Achieved

You assess and judge each learner's performance across the key aspects of the group award to determine their whole qualification grade. You must align judgements with the whole qualification grade descriptors, which are:

Achieved with Distinction

This candidate consistently demonstrates outstanding knowledge, understanding and application of skills. Thinking and working independently to an exceptional standard, they apply excellent judgement and creative problem-solving skills. They achieve or exceed agreed aims by confidently applying an extensive range of meta-skills and working very effectively with colleagues and peers.

Achieved with Merit

This candidate demonstrates an excellent level of knowledge, understanding and application of skills. Thinking and working independently to a high standard, they demonstrate good judgement and effective problem-solving skills. They achieve agreed aims by applying a broad range of meta-skills and working effectively with colleagues and peers.

Achieved

This candidate demonstrates thorough knowledge, understanding and application of skills. They think and work independently and use their judgement to find solutions to problems. They achieve agreed aims by applying a range of meta-skills and working well with colleagues and peers.

Successful learners receive their grade, along with the grade descriptor text, on their commemorative certificate.

In addition, you assess individual units on a pass or fail basis. Each unit has evidence requirements that learners must achieve before you can consider them for whole qualification grading.

You make judgements about learners' quality of assessment evidence using a grading matrix based on important criteria in the qualification.

Grading and meta-skills

Meta-skills are a key part of the NextGen: HN qualifications and learners develop them throughout the group award. Competence in individual meta-skills is not assessed or graded.

For example, the qualification does not judge the quality of learners' feeling or creativity, or their specific progress in any given meta-skill. Rather, it is the process of development the learner goes through that contributes to the whole qualification judgement. This means learners should provide evidence of planning, developing and reflecting on their meta-skills. The grading matrix includes criteria on meta-skills, which you should use to support this judgement. See the NextGen: HN Meta-skills, Outcome and Assessment Guidance document for support with assessing meta-skills.

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How the group award meets employer needs

This group award is designed in collaboration with employers to meet the sector need. The following tables show how the group award can benefit employers by producing learners with the necessary skill set.

The first table shows how units map to the aims of the group award. The second table shows how the units map to National Occupational Standards and/or trade or professional body requirements. The third table shows the significant opportunities that the group award provides for learners to develop more generic skills and meta-skills. The final table shows the assessment strategy for the group award.

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Mapping group award aims to units

General aims

Key: Aim is relevant to unit (X)   Aim is not as relevant to unit (N/A)

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7	Aim 8
J6E9 47	Exercise Practitioner 1	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
J6E8 47	Training Principles for Exercise	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
J6E7 47	Anatomy and Physiology for Exercise and Human Movement	x	N/A	x	N/A	x	x	N/A	x
J6EA 47	Health Promotion, Behaviour Change and Nutrition	x	N/A	x	x	x	x	x	x
J6T2 47	Preparing to work in the Physical Activity and Health Industry	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Specific aims

Key: Aim is relevant to unit (X)   Aim is not as relevant to unit (N/A)

Unit code	Unit title	Aim 1	Aim 2	Aim 3	Aim 4	Aim 5	Aim 6	Aim 7	Aim 8
J6E9 47	Exercise Practitioner 1	N/A	N/A	x	x	x	x	x	x
J6E8 47	Training Principles for Exercise	N/A	N/A	x	x	N/A	x	x	x
J6E7 47	Anatomy and Physiology for Exercise and Human Movement	x	x	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
J6EA 47	Health Promotion, Behaviour Change and Nutrition	N/A	x	x	x	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
J6T2 47	Preparing to work in the Physical Activity and Health Industry	N/A	N/A	N/A	x	x	N/A	x	x

Mapping National Occupational Standards (NOS) and/or trade or professional body requirements to units

Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA)

This qualification has been mapped to the following professional standard for a gym instructor practitioner from CIMSPA.

1   Maximise the customer experience:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K1.1	Customer needs	TP: OC3. OC4, OC5 PWPAHI: OC3 EP1: OC3, OC6	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K1.2	Customer service	PWPAHI: OC3 EP1: OC3, OC5	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K1.3	Customer engagement	PWPAHI: OC2, OC3 EP1: OC2, OC3, OC4	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K1.4	Customer communication	EP1: OC3, OC4, OC5 TP: OC3 PWPAHI: OC2, OC3	Learner portfolio	
S1.1	Customer data	PWPAHI: OC2, OC3 EP1: OC4	Learner portfolio	
S1.2	Customer engagement	PWPAHI: OC2 EP1: OC2, OC3, OC4	Learner portfolio	
S1.3	Customer service	PWPAHI: OC2 EP1: OC2, OC3, OC4	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S1.4	Develop rapport with customers	PWPAHI: OC2 EP1: OC2, OC3, OC4	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S1.5	Professional demeanour	PWPAHI: OC2	Learner portfolio	
S1.6	Communication	PWPAHI: OC2	Learner portfolio	

2 Routine maintenance and cleaning:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K2.1	Cleaning substances	EP1: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K2.2	Cleaning equipment	EP1: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K2.3	Safe systems of work	PWPAHI: OC2 EP1: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K2.4	Personal safety	EP1: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K2.5	Hazards	EP1: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K2.6	Cleaning schedules	EP1: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K2.7	Waste management	EP1: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S2.1	Preparing to clean	PWPAHI: OC2 EP1: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S2.2	Cleaning activities	PWPAHI: OC2 EP1: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S2.3	Hazards	PWPAHI: OC2 EP1: OC1	Learner portfolio	
S2.4	Communication	PWPAHI: OC2, OC3 EP1: OC2, OC3, OC4, OC6	Learner portfolio	

3 Exercise anatomy and physiology:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K3.1	Structure and function of the circulatory system	AP: OC3	SOLAR assessment	
K3.2	Structure and function of the respiratory system	AP: OC3,	SOLAR assessment	
K3.3	Structure and function of the skeleton	AP: OC1	SOLAR assessment	
K3.4	Joints	AP: OC1	SOLAR assessment	
K3.5	Muscular system	AP: OC1, OC2	SOLAR assessment	
K3.6	Life-course of the musculoskeletal system	AP: OC5	SOLAR assessment	
K3.7	Energy systems	AP: OC5	SOLAR assessment	
K3.8	Nervous system	AP: OC2	SOLAR assessment	
K3.9	Digestive system	AP: OC1	SOLAR assessment	
K3.10	Anatomical planes of movement	TP: OC1	SOLAR assessment	
K3.11	Anatomical terms of location	TP: OC1	SOLAR assessment and/or learner portfolio	
K3.12	Anatomical terms of location	TP: OC1	SOLAR assessment and/or learner portfolio	
S3.1	Applied biomechanics and kinesiology	AP: OC1, OC2, OC3, OC4, OC5	Learner portfolio	

4 Consultations, assessments and gym inductions:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K4.1	Client consultation process	TP: OC3 HPBCN: OC3 PWPAHI: OC2, OC3	Learner portfolio	
K4.2	Health screening and risk stratification	TP: OC3 EP1: OC3	Learner portfolio	
K4.3	Client assessment and review process	TP: OC3 HPBCN: OC3	Learner portfolio	
K4.4	Client induction process	TP: OC2 EP1: OC2	Learner portfolio	
S4.1	Conduct consultations, assessments and gym inductions	TP: OC2 EP1: OC2 PWPAHI: OC2, OC3	Learner portfolio	

5 Lifestyle management and client motivation:

CIMPSA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K5.1	Lifestyle and health promotion	TP: OC4, OC5 HPBCN: OC1, OC3, OC4, OC5 EP1: OC3	Learner portfolio	
K5.2	Prevention and management of common health conditions	HPBCN: OC1, OC2, OC3, OC5 TP: OC3	Learner portfolio	
K5.3	Behaviour change and exercise adherence	HPBCN: OC3 EP1: OC3, OC4, OC5	Learner portfolio	
S5.1	Motivation	TP: OC3 HPBCN: OC3	Learner portfolio	
S5.2	Goal setting	HPBCN: OC1, OC3, OC4 TP: OC3 EP1: OC5	Learner portfolio	
S5.3	Health promotion	HPBCN: OC2, OC3,	Academic report	

6 Plan and review gym programmes:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K6.1	Plan gym-based programmes	TP: OC1, OC2, OC4, OC5	Learner portfolio	
K6.2	Monitor and review gym-based exercise programmes	EP1: OC5, OC6	Learner portfolio	
S6.1	Plan gym-based exercise programmes	EP1: OC6	Learner portfolio	
S6.2	Monitor and review gym-based exercise programmes	EP1: OC6	Learner portfolio	

7 Exercise supervision and technique:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K7.1	Gym-based exercise training methods	TP: OC1, OC2 EP1: OC2, OC3	Learner portfolio	
K7.2	Gym-based exercise technique	EP1: OC2, OC3	Learner portfolio and/or assessor checklist	
K7.3	Gym-based exercise demonstrations	EP1: OC2, OC3	Learner portfolio and/or assessor checklist	
K7.4	Supervise gym-based exercise	EP1: OC2, OC3,	Learner portfolio and/or assessor checklist	
S7.1	Supervise gym-based exercise	EP1: OC2, OC3	Learner portfolio	
S7.2	Gym-based exercise demonstrations	EP1: OC2, OC3	Learner portfolio and/or assessor checklist	

8   Professional practice:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K8.1	Conduct and ethics	PWIPAHI: OC5	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K8.2	National guidelines, legislation and organisational procedures	PWIPAHI: OC2, OC5	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K8.3	Professional development	PWIPAHI: OC5	Learner portfolio	
K8.4	Business acumen	EP1: OC6 TP: OC5 PWIPAHI: OC1, OC4	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S8.1	Work alone and as part of a team with minimal supervision	EP1: OC2, OC3, OC4 PWIPAHI: OC3, OC4	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S8.2	Responsibility and professional duty of care to clients	EP1: OC2, OC3, OC4 PWIPAHI: OC2, OC3	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	

Mapping National Occupational Standards (NOS) and/or trade or professional body requirements to units

Chartered Institute for the Management for Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA)

This qualification has been mapped to the following Professional Standard for a Group Exercise Instructor Practitioner from CIMSPA.

1 Maximise the customer experience:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K1.1	Customer needs	TP: OC3. OC4, OC5 PWPAHI: OC3 EP1: OC3, OC6	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K1.2	Customer service	PWPAHI: OC3 EP1: OC3, OC5	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K1.3	Customer engagement	PWPAHI: OC2, OC3 EP1: OC2, OC3, OC4	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K1.4	Customer communication	EP1: OC3, OC4, OC5 TP: OC3 PWPAHI: OC2, OC3	Learner portfolio	
S1.1	Customer data	PWPAHI: OC2, OC3 EP1: OC4	Learner portfolio	
S1.2	Customer engagement	PWPAHI: OC2 EP1: OC2, OC3, OC4	Learner portfolio	
S1.3	Customer service	PWPAHI: OC2 EP1: OC2, OC3, OC4	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S1.4	Develop rapport with customers	PWPAHI: OC2 EP1: OC2, OC3, OC4	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S1.5	Professional demeanour	PWPAHI: OC2	Learner portfolio	
S1.6	Communication	PWPAHI: OC2	Learner portfolio	

2 Exercise anatomy and physiology:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K2.1	Structure and function of the circulatory system	AP: OC3	SOLAR assessment	
K2.2	Structure and function of the respiratory system	AP: OC3,	SOLAR assessment	
K2.3	Structure and function of the skeleton	AP: OC1	SOLAR assessment	
K2.4	Joints	AP: OC1	SOLAR assessment	
K2.5	Muscular system	AP: OC1, OC2	SOLAR assessment	
K2.6	Life-course of the musculoskeletal system	AP: OC5	SOLAR assessment	
K2.7	Energy systems	AP: OC5	SOLAR assessment	
K2.8	Nervous system	AP: OC2	SOLAR assessment	
K2.9	Digestive system	AP: OC1	SOLAR assessment	
K2.10	Anatomical planes of movement	TP: OC1	SOLAR assessment	
K2.11	Anatomical terms of location	TP: OC1	SOLAR assessment and/or learner portfolio	
K2.12	Anatomical terms of location	TP: OC1	SOLAR assessment and/or learner portfolio	
S2.1	Applied biomechanics and kinesiology	AP: OC1, OC2, OC3, OC4, OC5	Learner portfolio	

3 Lifestyle management and client motivation:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K3.1	Lifestyle and health promotion	TP: OC4, OC5 HPBCN: OC1, OC3, OC4, OC5 EP1: OC3	Learner portfolio	
K3.2	Prevention and management of common health conditions	HPBCN: OC1, OC2, OC3, OC5 TP: OC3	Learner portfolio	
K3.3	Behaviour change and exercise adherence	HPBCN: OC3 EP1: OC3, OC4, OC5	Learner portfolio	
S3.1	Motivation	TP: OC3 HPBCN: OC3	Learner portfolio	
S3.2	Goal setting	HPBCN: OC1, OC3, OC4 TP: OC3 EP1: OC5	Learner portfolio	
S3.3	Health promotion	HPBCN: OC2, OC3,	Learner portfolio	

4   Plan and review group exercise:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K4.1	Plan group exercise programmes	TP: OC5	Learner portfolio	
K4.2	Monitor and review gym-based exercise programmes	EP1: OC5, OC6	Learner portfolio	
S4.1	Plan group exercise programmes	TP1: OC5	Learner portfolio	
S4.2	Monitor and review group exercise programmes	EP1: OC6	Learner portfolio	

5   Deliver and supervise group exercise:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K5.1	Group exercise training methods	TP: OC1, OC2 EP1: OC2, OC4	Learner portfolio	
K5.2	Group exercise technique	EP1: OC2, OC4	Learner portfolio	
K5.3	Deliver group exercise	EP1: OC2, OC4	Learner portfolio	
K5.4	Supervise group exercise	EP1: OC2, OC4	Learner portfolio	
S5.1	Group exercise demonstrations	EP1: OC2, OC4	Learner portfolio	
S5.2	Deliver group exercise sessions/ programmes	EP1: OC2, OC4	Learner portfolio	

6 Professional practice:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K6.1	Conduct and ethics	PWIPAHI: OC5	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K6.2	National guidelines, legislation and organisational procedures	PWIPAHI: OC2, OC5	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K6.3	Professional development	PWIPAHI: OC5	Learner portfolio	
K6.4	Business acumen	EP1: OC6 TP: OC5 PWIPAHI: OC1, OC4	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S6.1	Work alone and as part of a team with minimal supervision	EP1: OC2, OC3, OC4 PWIPAHI: OC3, OC4	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S6.2	Responsibility and professional duty of care to clients	EP1: OC2, OC3, OC4 PWIPAHI: OC2, OC3	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	

Mapping National Occupational Standards (NOS) and/or trade or professional body requirements to units

Chartered Institute for the Management for Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA)

This qualification has been mapped to the following Professional Standard for Health Navigator from CIMSPA.

1 Care, communication and relationships:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K1.1	Person-centred care	PWIPAHI: OC1, OC2, OC3 HPBCN:	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K1.2	Effective communication	PWIPAHI: OC2	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K1.3	Professional relationships	PWIPAHI: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S1.1	Person-centred interventions	TP: OC2 HPBCN: OC3	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S1.2	Effective communication	TP: 0C2, OC3 EP1: OC2. OC3, OC4	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S1.3	Professional relationships	PWIPAHI: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	

2 Supporting behaviour change:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K2.1	Underpinning knowledge	HPBCN: OC3 TP: OC4, OC5	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K2.2	Intervention style	HPBCN: OC3 PWIPAHI: OC2, OC3	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K2.3	Maintaining client contact	PWIPAHI: OC2, OC3 EP1: OC3, OC4	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S2.1	Theory of behaviour change and underpinning theoretical knowledge	HPBCN: OC1, OC3 TP: OC2	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S2.2	Style of intervention	HPBCN: OC3 PWIPAHI: OC2, OC3	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S2.3	Maintaining client contact	PWIPAHI: OC2, OC3	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	

3 Health, activity and lifestyle:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K3.1	Health context and health inequalities	HPBCN: OC1	Digital artefact and/or poster presentation	
K3.2	Definitions, benefits and risks of physical activity / inactivity	HPBCN: OC1	Digital artefact and/or poster presentation	
K3.3	Key health and lifestyle messages and guidance	HPBCN: OC1	Digital artefact and/or poster presentation	
S3.1	Targeted and tailored interventions	EP1: OC3, OC4 TP: OC2	Digital artefact and/or poster presentation	
S3.2	Tailored benefits and risks of increasing physical activity	EP1: HPBCN: OC1	Digital artefact and/or poster presentation	
S3.3	Tailored health and lifestyle messages and guidance	EP1: HPBCN: OC1	Digital artefact and/or poster presentation	

4 Partners, pathways and signposting:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K4.1	Engagement with partners and people	PWPAHI: OC1, OC2	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K4.2	Local pathways	PWPAHI: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K4.3	Signposting, resources and records	PWPAHI: OC1 TP: OC3	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S4.1	Engagement with partners and people	PWPAHI: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S4.2	Local pathways	PWPAHI: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S4.3	Signposting, resources and records	PWPAHI: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	

5 Professional skills:

CIMSPA reference	Knowledge and understanding	Evidence (specified reference)	Suggested assessment method	Comments
K5.1	Scope of practice and professional boundaries	EP1: OC5 PWPAHI: OC1 TP: OC4, OC5	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K5.2	Legislative, regulatory and health safety requirements	PWPAHI: OC2, TP: OC4	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
K5.3	Data collection and evaluation	PWPAHI: OC2, OC3 TP: OC3, OC4, OC5 HBBCN: OC2	Learner portfolio	
K5.4	Continuing professional development	PWPAHI: OC5	Learner portfolio	
S5.1	Professional boundaries	EP1: OC5 TP: OC4	Learner portfolio	
S5.2	Legislative, regulatory and health and safety requirements	PWPAHI: OC1	Learner portfolio and/or restricted response questions	
S5.3	Data collection and evaluation	PWPAHI: OC1 TP: OC3, OC5 HPBCN: OC1	Learner portfolio	
S5.4	Continual professional development	PWPAHI: OC5	Learner portfolio	

Mapping opportunities to develop meta-skills across the group award

Self-management

Unit code	Unit title	Meta-skills
J6E8 47	Training Principles for Exercise	♦ Focusing ♦ Integrity ♦ Adapting ♦ Initiative
J6E9 47	Exercise Practitioner 1	♦ Focusing ♦ Integrity ♦ Adapting ♦ Initiative
J6EA 47	Health Promotion, Behaviour Change and Nutrition	♦ Focusing ♦ Integrity ♦ Adapting ♦ Initiative
J6T2 47	Preparing to Work in the Physical Activity and Health Industry	♦ Focusing ♦ Integrity ♦ Adapting ♦ Initiative
J6E7 47	Anatomy and Physiology for Exercise and Human Movement	♦ Focusing ♦ Integrity ♦ Adapting ♦ Initiative

Social intelligence

Unit code	Unit title	Meta-skills
J6E8 47	Training Principles for Exercise	♦ Communication ♦ Feeling ♦ Collaborating ♦ Leading
J6E9 47	Exercise Practitioner 1	♦ Communication ♦ Feeling ♦ Collaborating ♦ Leading
J6EA 47	Health Promotion, Behaviour Change and Nutrition	♦ Communication ♦ Feeling ♦ Collaborating ♦ Leading
J6T2 47	Preparing to Work in the Physical Activity and Health Industry	♦ Communication ♦ Feeling ♦ Collaborating ♦ Leading
J6E7 47	Anatomy and Physiology for Exercise and Human Movement	♦ Communication ♦ Feeling ♦ Collaborating ♦ Leading

Innovation

Unit code	Unit title	Meta-skills
J6E8 47	Training Principles for Exercise	♦ Curiosity ♦ Creativity ♦ Sense-making ♦ Critical thinking
J6E9 47	Exercise Practitioner 1	♦ Curiosity ♦ Creativity ♦ Sense-making ♦ Critical thinking
J6EA 47	Health Promotion, Behaviour Change and Nutrition	♦ Curiosity ♦ Creativity ♦ Sense-making ♦ Critical thinking
J6T2 47	Preparing to Work in the Physical Activity and Health Industry	♦ Curiosity ♦ Creativity ♦ Sense-making ♦ Critical thinking
J6E7 47	Anatomy and Physiology for Exercise and Human Movement	♦ Curiosity ♦ Creativity ♦ Sense-making ♦ Critical thinking

Assessment strategy for the group award

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J6E8 47	Training Principles for Exercise	This unit allows for integration of assessment with Exercise Practitioner 1. The outcomes across both units complement each other and allow for learners to plan and deliver inductions and exercise sessions to individuals and small groups. Learners do a range of assessment methods, including open-book assignments, project work and formative and summative practical observations. Learners develop an exercise library for gym-based movements, cardiovascular exercises, flexibility exercises and mobility exercises. Learners: ♦ plan an appropriate gym-based induction for an individual and a small group ♦ conduct a client consultation and apply appropriate fitness and health assessments for a healthy client ♦ develop an individual training intervention — assessed in the Exercise Practitioner 1 unit as a practical assessment ♦ develop a group training intervention — assessed in the Exercise Practitioner 1 unit as a practical assessment

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J6E9 47	Exercise Practitioner 1	You can integrate assessment for this unit and Training Principles for Exercise. The outcomes across both units complement each other and allow for learners to plan and deliver inductions and exercise sessions to individuals and small groups. Learners undertake a range of assessment methods, including open-book assignments, project work, and formative and summative practical observations. Learners: ♦ recognise the importance of health and safety in an exercise environment, and complete risk assessments for a variety of environments ♦ learn about health and safety policy and legislation in relation to the industry, the importance of cleaning and maintaining equipment, and answer a series of closed-book questions As this is a largely practical unit, learners are formatively and summatively assessed through observation checklists, or by recording themselves completing practical tasks for the assessor to judge and feedback on. These practical observations include gym inductions for an individual and small group, as well as learners being observed taking an individual and a small group through a planned exercise session. As Exercise Practitioner 1 is the project unit in this qualification, assessments for other mandatory units appear in the learner portfolio or e-portfolio. You must ensure that all evidence in the portfolio or e-portfolio meets the evidence requirements for each outcome.

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J6EA 47	Health Promotion, Behaviour Change and Nutrition	This unit allows for integration of assessment with other mandatory units in the HNC, including Training Principles for Exercise at SCQF level 7, Preparing to Work in the Physical Activity and Health Industry at SCQF level 7, and Anatomy and Physiology for Exercise and Human Movement at SCQF level 7. The outcomes across these units complement each other, allowing you to reduce the volume of assessment. There are details of cross- and holistic assessment in Health Promotion, Behaviour Change and Nutrition at SCQF level 7. Learners do a range of assessment methods, including open-book assignments, reports, portfolio, e-portfolio work, client consultations, oral questioning, presentation, factsheet, infographic or other similar digital artefacts that develop content for an e-portfolio. Learners reflect on current industry practices in health promotion and behaviour change with a focus on physical activity, healthy eating and mental well-being, and awareness of other elements that affect well-being. This unit focuses on developing evidence-based knowledge and practical skills, where learners evaluate information, build relationships and generate a portfolio of evidence that demonstrates their competence and reflective learning. Learners can generate evidence from a workplace setting or through role-play simulations.
J6E7 47	Anatomy and Physiology for Exercise and Human Movement	This unit has various forms of evidence gathering, where centres can choose to use closed-book or open-book assessments. Learners can evidence knowledge and skills by multiple-choice, short response and/or extended response questions. We encourage you to deliver theory, experiential participation and practical instruction through gym and group exercise programmes as part of the assessment in the units Training Principles for Exercise at SCQF level 7 and Exercise Practitioner 1 at SCQF level 7. Learners demonstrate their knowledge and understanding through the client consultation, and health and fitness testing. They also plan safe and effective exercise programmes for a range of clients.

Unit code	Unit title	Assessment method
J6T2 47	Preparing to Work in the Physical Activity and Health Industry	This unit allows for integration of assessment with Exercise Practitioner 1. The outcomes across both units complement each other and allow for learners to build their knowledge and skills in working with clients. Learners do a range of assessment methods, including open-book assignments, reports, a project and logbook work. They use a social media platform of their choice to design and create an account.

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Approaches to delivery and assessment

The following information can help you to shape learning and teaching activities.

We recommend you integrate delivery of Exercise Practitioner 1 at SCQF level 7 and Training Principles for Exercise at SCQF level 7. Training Principles for Exercise at SCQF level 7 includes the screening and planning aspects for working with clients and provides the planning basis for the practical delivery assessments in Exercise Practitioner 1 at SCQF level 7.

There are also opportunities to integrate delivery of outcomes from Preparing to Work in the Physical Activity and Health Industry, and Health Promotion, Behaviour Change and Nutrition.

Possible delivery methods include:

♦ classroom activities

♦ field trips

♦ visits and group work

You should use learning and teaching approaches that are varied and appropriate to the aims of the unit.

Assessors and internal verifiers must hold an industry and/or subject-specific qualification equivalent to the CIMSPA Professional Standards embedded in the qualification. Centre staff should have relevant industry experience and be able to demonstrate industry-relevant CPD to maintain their subject-specific knowledge and skills.

Sequencing or integrating units

We recommend that you teach and assess all the mandatory units across the whole academic session. This gives scope for learners to develop their knowledge and skills in becoming an exercise practitioner and to review their meta-skills development in other contexts and units.

The following tables show suggested delivery models using a two semester or three block timetable. These are based on common delivery of 36 hours for 8 SCQF points (1 SQA credit). This is only a suggested model and there are many other ways to schedule learning and teaching for HNC Physical Activity and Health.

Suggested timetable for two semesters (18 weeks per semester)

Unit	Semester 1	Semester 2
Anatomy and Physiology	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)
Training Principles for Exercise	3 hours per week (1.5 SQA credits)	3 hours per week (1.5 SQA credits)
Exercise Practitioner 1	3 hours per week (1.5 SQA credits)	3 hours per week (1.5 SQA credits)
Health Promotion, Behaviour Change and Nutrition	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)
Preparing to Work in the Physical Activity and Health Industry	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)
Optional unit 1	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)	Not applicable
Optional unit 2	Not applicable	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)
Optional unit 3	Not applicable	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)

We recommend that centres choose two optional units in semester 2, as this is typically when learners are being practically assessed, working with clients or doing a work placement. Teaching should be less intense in the second semester for some mandatory units.

Suggested timetable for three blocks (12 weeks per block)

Unit	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3
Anatomy and Physiology	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)	Not applicable
Training Principles for Exercise	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)
Exercise Practitioner 1	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)
Health Promotion, Behaviour Change and Nutrition	Not applicable	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)
Preparing to Work in the Physical Activity and Health Industry	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)	Not applicable	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)
Optional unit 1	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)	Not applicable	Not applicable
Optional unit 2	Not applicable	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)	Not applicable
Optional unit 3	Not applicable	Not applicable	2 hours per week (1 SQA credit)

Additional guidance for Research Skills unit delivery

The Research Skills unit develops skills in planning, investigating, analysing, evaluating, and presenting complex information from a variety of primary and secondary sources relevant to the context of sport, health and physical activity.

You can deliver this unit as a stand-alone research project or within the following mandatory units:

♦ Preparing to Work in the Physical Activity and Health Industry at SCQF level 7
♦ Health Promotion, Behaviour Change and Nutrition at SCQF level 7

Sport, health and physical activity resources for learners include (but are not limited to):

♦ published academic journals
♦ academic books
♦ Scottish Health Survey
♦ World Health Organisation (WHO)
♦ Office for National Statistics (ONS)
♦ Public Health Scotland (PHS)
♦ national governing bodies, such as SportScotland

Approaches to delivery

Learners should have the opportunity to discuss current or local sport, health and physical activity issues to build on their experience, emphasise the importance of accuracy in interpreting reliable primary and secondary data, and encourage research focus.

You can provide learners with examples of primary and secondary sources appropriate to the area of research.

Primary sources could include:

♦ interviews
♦ surveys
♦ focus groups
♦ personal observations
♦ meeting records
♦ transcript recordings
♦ fieldwork and personal observation in a workplace

Primary sources listed are examples only. This is not an exhaustive list.

Secondary sources could include:

♦ websites
♦ books
♦ professional journals
♦ associated health publications
♦ associated sport publications

Secondary sources listed are examples only. This is not an exhaustive list.

Before accessing secondary sources, a tour of the library can help learners identify suitable secondary sources. Similarly, an online tour or training can help them access online secondary sources, such as online bibliographic databases. You can give learners evaluation criteria to check the reliability, authority and purpose of the information they access.

You should encourage learners to learn the techniques for research and introduce them to a range of survey and interview types and methods. Assessors can give learners advice on:

♦ note-taking
♦ questionnaire design
♦ sampling methods and procedures
♦ interview skills

Learners can practise designing interview questions and questionnaires in small focus groups. You can use peer discussions to evaluate the relevance of primary resource design, purpose and practicality. You can explain how to collate tables or diagrams to summarise results and present numerical data effectively.

You should encourage learners to generate original ideas as they analyse and evaluate findings relating to the aims and objectives of the research. The content, format, medium, reporting and referencing systems of the research are recognised by the type of investigation and the vocational discipline. These may vary considerably, depending on the topic of study.

You should emphasise the importance of presenting information and conclusions to a professional standard.

To support learners in completing each outcome, we recommend that you give them an outcome-specific template with structured headings to show the content and detail required.

The following are pointers that most research investigations or academic reports should cover.

Academic report writing structure

Title page
Learners should include the title of their research, their name and the date. The title should reflect the nature of their research and be succinct and to the point.

Acknowledgements
Learners may wish to acknowledge the help given to them throughout their research. Acknowledgements generally come after the title page.

Contents
Learners should produce the contents page when their report is complete.

The abstract
In most cases, an abstract is required. Practices can vary depending on the further or higher institution attended, so it is best for learners to follow their centre's policy and procedures. It can be quite difficult to say in a few words what their research sets out to do, the methods employed and what conclusions were reached. Learners should get into the habit of looking at abstracts, which are usually placed at the beginning of journal articles.

Aims and purpose of the research

This should be a short explanation of the purpose of the research. Learners should explain the research problem in a few sentences and provide any background to the research to place it in context.

Draw attention to any limitations of the research. Learners cannot do everything in small-scale research.

Review of the literature

Not all academic reports require a review of previous research. In the main, a review of literature is normally reserved for those who are participating in research at SCQF levels 11 (Masters) and 12 (Doctorate).

In a small-scale research project, learners may decide, with your agreement, to use their reading to support or reject arguments throughout their report. The value of the review is that it allows learners to explain the background and context of their research.

If the literature review is required, it can normally be written first. If learners have structured their writing skills sufficiently, they may be able to write up sections and sub-sections as they have completed them. Much of the work of this section will be ready for revision before they begin to collect data. Learners may find that they need to adapt their original version as they progress through their small-scale research project.

Methods of data collection

This section details how the learner investigated the problem and why they employed particular methods and techniques. It provides accounts of the:

♦ procedure
♦ size of sample
♦ method of selection
♦ choice of variables and controls
♦ tests of measurement
♦ statistical analysis (if any are provided)

Learners should consult with you about how much detail is required. They should define important terms precisely, along with any deficiencies in the methods they mention.

Statement of results

This is the main part of learners' academic reports. It consists of text and, if necessary, tables and figures. Tables, charts and graphs should illustrate and illuminate the text. The text written after the results should highlight significant aspects of the findings, so that all relevant facts are presented in a way that draws attention to what is most important.

All tables and figures should be numbered, given a title and carefully checked before learners submit their reports.

Analysis and discussion

Learners should start this section by restating the problem, before discussing how the results affect existing knowledge of the subject. If the research is aimed at testing a certain hypothesis, then this section should demonstrate whether it was or wasn't supported by the evidence. In most instances, it makes sense to write the following sections (review of literature, methods of data collection, analysis and discussion) in sequence, to ensure continuity and logical progression.

Summary and conclusions

The main conclusions have been discussed in the statement of results section and should be summarised succinctly. Learners should only make conclusions that can be justifiably drawn from their findings. Before learners write this section, they should read through the whole report and make a note of the key points.

List of references

References should:

♦   justify and support arguments
♦   allow learners to make comparisons with other research
♦   demonstrate learners' familiarity with their field of work

(Blaxter, L., Hughes, C. and Tight, M. (2010) *How to Research*. (4th edn). Maidenhead: Open University Press.)

Opinions vary as to whether learners should include a full bibliography or a list of references, or both. Some centres require a full bibliography, which includes all sources consulted during preparation of the research. Learners should use the recognised referencing system used by your centre.

Appendices

Learners should include copies of any data collection instruments (such as questionnaires and interview schedules) in the appendices, unless they have been instructed otherwise.

Length

You should offer learners guidance on the length of the small-scale research project. Please refer to the unit specification for further details. If a maximum number of words is specified, learners should not exceed that number.

Quotations

Learners must acknowledge all quotations. If quotes are only a few words or one sentence, it is sufficient to acknowledge them by using inverted commas in the main text, with the source in brackets. If the quotation is longer, learners should indent it and state the author, date of publication and page number.

Presentations

Academic reports are usually word-processed using double-line spacing. Learners should number pages and print on one side of the page only, leaving a left-hand margin of 1.5 inches. Learners should be aware of your centre's rules about presentation. It is up to your centre whether reports need to be bound.

Oral presentation

An oral presentation of relevant information from the research investigation should include:

♦ an analysis and evaluation of information gathered from the research investigation

♦ a summary of findings and accurate conclusions drawn

♦ effective use of non-verbal communication

♦ use of appropriate pace and tone

♦ confident use of audio-visual support

♦ confident and accurate responses to in-depth questioning

Additional guidance on integrated or holistic assessment

Holistic or integrated assessment focuses on assessing a number of outcomes in a unit together, or in some cases the whole unit, rather than specific outcomes. When assessing a unit of competence holistically, the assessment activities integrate a number of aspects of the competence. Holistic or integrated assessment can reduce the time spent on assessment and can promote greater equity in the assessment process.

When developing or revising a Higher National Qualification, SQA works with a development team to devise an appropriate assessment strategy that accommodates holistic or integrated assessment. However, the practice of integrating units for the purposes of learning and teaching is a centre-led activity.

Units are designed to facilitate holistic or integrated assessment approaches that prevent large, unwieldy instruments of assessment.

Sometimes more than one piece of evidence is needed for a unit. For example, if a unit is about building a wall, a learner would need to produce evidence of performance (following the correct procedures and processes when building the wall) and product (a completed wall).

Evidence requirements must do what they say: specify requirements for evidence of learner competence in the unit(s). The evidence must be of sufficient quality for an assessor or verifier to judge that the learner has achieved the unit(s).

Assessing project units

Exercise Practitioner 1 is the main project unit for this qualification. As learners take the mandatory units, their learner portfolio consists of a range of assessments that showcases their journey to become an exercise practitioner. Each of the mandatory units is mapped to the national occupational standards for gym instructor practitioner, group exercise instructor practitioner and health navigator. Learners should gain a wide range of knowledge and skills

in each of these standards, as well as developing an evidence-based approach to working with clients through work placement and academic investigation.

Opportunities for e-assessment

Assessment that is supported by information and communication technology (ICT), such as e-testing or the use of e-portfolios or social software, may be appropriate for some assessments in this unit.

If you want to use e-assessment, you must ensure that you apply the national standard to all evidence and that conditions of assessment (as specified in the evidence requirements) are met, regardless of the mode of gathering evidence.

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Remediation and re-assessment in Next Generation Higher National Qualifications

Remediation

Remediation allows an assessor to clarify learners' responses, either by a written amendment or by oral questioning. If there is a minor shortfall or omission in evidence requirements, assessors must formally note such instances, in writing or as a recording, and make them available to the internal and external verifier.

The size and structure of the larger NextGen: HN units should mean that the assessor or lecturer is close enough to ongoing assessment activity in project-based units to identify the requirement for remediation as it occurs.

Re-assessment

Learners who do not meet the minimum evidence requirements in their first submission, and on occasions where minor or oral remediation are not appropriate, assessors and lecturers can ask learners to submit a second submission to re-assess their competence in meeting the evidence requirements for the outcome.

As part of the NextGen: HN Physical Activity and Health qualification, we have introduced greater opportunities for holistic and cross-assessment within the larger units of the framework, and therefore expect instances of re-assessment to be minimal. If re-assessment is required within the project-based unit, learners must be given a re-assessment opportunity, but we recommend that this should be undertaken with an alternative client.

Resource requirements

Centres delivering this qualification must have suitably qualified staff for each of the subject components. Your centre should already have established processes to ensure staff are appropriately qualified to deliver in this subject area. New centres must have staff who have subject knowledge. They can demonstrate this with an SCQF level 8 or above in an exercise or fitness-based subject qualification, or a relevant industry-recognised qualification.

Learners should have access to a range of gym equipment, including a selection for each of the following:

♦ cardiovascular equipment
♦ fixed resistance machines including a cable pulley
♦ free weight equipment, including barbells, dumbbells, Olympic bars, weight plates, adjustable benches, squat or power rack, and appropriate flooring
♦ functional exercise equipment including medicine balls, kettlebells, Swiss balls, mats, powerbags and plyo boxes

This is not an exhaustive list.

Learners should also have access to library resources, including online resources such as SPORTDiscus to allow them to research topics and theories across the physical activity and health subject area. We recommend that learners can access original research articles and

textbooks to support learning and teaching across each of the mandatory and optional units. You should take care when you refer to research articles that these are accessible to learners.

Access to digital equipment, such as computers, laptops or tablets, helps support learners' digital skills development. 'Digital first' is an aim of NextGen: HN developments.

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Information for centres

Equality and inclusion

The units in this group award are designed to be as fair and as accessible as possible, with no unnecessary barriers to learning or assessment.

You should take into account the needs of individual learners when planning learning experiences, selecting assessment methods, or considering alternative evidence.

Guidance on assessment arrangements for disabled learners and/or those with additional support needs is available on the assessment arrangements web page.

Internal and external verification

All instruments of assessment used in this qualification should be internally verified according to your centre's policies and SQA's guidelines.

SQA carries out external verification to ensure that internal assessment meets the national guidelines for this qualification.

Further information on internal and external verification is available in SQA's Guide to Assessment.

Glossary

SQA credit value: the credit value allocated to a unit gives an indication of the contribution the unit makes to an SQA group award. An SQA credit value of 1 represents approximately 40 hours of programmed learning, teaching and assessment.

SCQF: the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) provides the national common framework for describing programmes of learning and qualifications in Scotland. SCQF terminology is used throughout this guide to refer to credits and levels. For further information on the SCQF, visit the [SCQF](#) website.

SCQF credit points: SCQF credit points provide a way of describing and comparing the amount of learning required to complete a qualification at a given level of the framework. 1 National Unit credit is equivalent to 6 SCQF credit points. 1 National Unit credit at Advanced Higher and 1 SQA Advanced unit credit (irrespective of level) is equivalent to 8 SCQF credit points.

SCQF levels: the level a qualification is assigned in the framework is an indication of how hard it is to achieve. The SCQF covers 12 levels of learning. SQA Advanced Certificates and SQA Advanced Diplomas are available at SCQF levels 7 and 8, respectively. SQA Advanced units are usually at levels 6 to 9 and graded units at level 7 and 8. National Qualification Group Awards are available at SCQF levels 2 to 6 and are usually made up of National Units, which are available from SCQF levels 2 to 7.

Information for learners

HNC Physical Activity and Health

This information explains:

♦ what the qualification is about

♦ what you should know or be able to do before you start

♦ what you will need to do during the qualification

♦ opportunities for further learning and employment

Group award information

The HNC in Physical Activity and Health is a new qualification. It supports the changing landscape of the sector and is in line with government and public health guidance and initiatives. An increasing number of people are becoming more active and understand the importance of looking after their health and well-being. There are several Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) professional standards embedded in the HNC. These allow you to gain employment in a variety of roles and get a better understanding of how you can support clients to navigate the range of partners or organisations that support people in becoming more active and leading a healthy lifestyle.

The unit Training Principles for Exercise enables you to develop an appreciation of the science behind coaching. It also builds the technical competencies you need to plan and prepare both individual and group-based exercise and physical activity sessions.

You develop knowledge and applied skills of physical and health-related assessments with a client and develop training interventions with formulated rationales.

The unit Exercise Practitioner 1 prepares you for employment in the physical activity and health industry as a gym instructor practitioner, group exercise practitioner and health navigator. You develop skills to instruct and evaluate gym-based exercise sessions for individuals and groups, and deliver gym-based exercise programmes and group exercise sessions.

The unit Anatomy for Exercise and Human Movement provides you with knowledge, skills and understanding of the body systems and basic biomechanical principles that underpin human movement.

The unit Health Promotion, Behaviour Change and Nutrition develops your understanding of health promotion, behaviour change and nutrition. It also develops your skills in applying evidence-based practical skills, to support a personalised action plan for an individual or group. You describe health promotion in different settings for selected topics, understand professional roles and signpost sources of support for clients.

The unit Preparing to Work in the Physical Activity and Health Industry helps prepare you to gain employment through workplace experience, and develop a range of skills in a practical environment. You also self-reflect on your performance and focus on continuing professional development (CPD) and how this is beneficial to your future career development.

You are assessed in several ways, including through closed-book assessments, open-book assignments, a portfolio, project work, posters, presentations, practical observations (summative and formative) and completing a work placement.

Meta-skills

You carry out a self-assessment of your own meta-skills baseline, create a plan for meta-skills development, carry out activities to develop and demonstrate meta-skills, and use reflective practice to monitor and assess the meta-skills you have improved or developed.

You develop meta-skills through experience. They include problem solving, critical thinking, communication, creativity and leadership.

Administrative information

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History of changes

Version	Description of change	Date

Note: please check SQA's website to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version of this guide, and check SQA's APS Navigator to ensure you are using the most up-to-date qualification structure.

If a unit is revised:

♦ no new centres can be approved to offer the previous version of the unit
♦ centres should only enter learners for the previous version of the unit if they can complete it before its finish date

For further information on SQA's Next Generation Higher National Qualifications please contact nextgen@sqa.org.uk.