



Qualification  
Guidance  
Syllabus

# Level 2 Certificate in Fitness Instructing (Gym)



Qualification  
Accreditation Number:  
500/8756/3  
Version FLM005053

Active iQ

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# Level 2 Certificate in Fitness Instructing (Gym)

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## Introduction

The Active IQ Certificate in Fitness Instructing (GYM) is at level 2 on the Regulated Qualifications Framework. It also provides access onto the Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) at level 2.

<b>Guided learning hours:</b> 157 <b>Total Qualification Time:</b> 230	<b>Credit:</b> 24
Minimum credit to be achieved at or above the level of the qualification	24
Requirements other than the award of credit which needs to be met before the qualification is awarded:	None
Exemptions:	None

## Entry Requirements

- Some experience of gym-based exercises, including free weights, is highly recommended
- The course requires physical exertion and individual participation is essential; therefore, a degree of physical fitness is necessary
- There is also an element of communication (discussing, presenting, reading and writing) involved and learners should have basic skills in communication pitched at level 2

## Qualification Outline

### Target Learners:

- Adults (aged 16+) wishing to pursue a career in the health and fitness sector as gym-based fitness instructors
- Please note that 16 to 18 year-olds may need to be supervised in the workplace, once they have achieved the qualification

### Aim:

- To train learners to a professionally competent level, enabling them to prescribe, plan and deliver safe and effective exercise programmes within a gym or health club environment

### Objectives:

- To develop learner's knowledge of anatomy and physiology and how it relates to exercise and fitness
- To develop learner's ability to plan and deliver safe and effective gym sessions
- To provide learners with the knowledge to develop good customer service and the personal qualities required by the exercise and fitness industry
- To provide learners with an awareness of health and safety in an exercise and fitness environment
- To provide learners with the opportunity to progress to further qualifications in the exercise and fitness industry

### **Progression:**

- This qualification provides progression to Level 2 NVQ Certificate in Instructing Exercise and Fitness, for learners who wish to develop and demonstrate occupational competence in gym instruction
- Alternatively, it provides progression to Level 3 qualifications in Personal Training for learners who wish to further their knowledge and skills and become personal trainers working with specialist populations as well as the general population
- Learners may also progress on to the Active IQ Level 3 Certificate in Sports Massage, where they will be provided with the knowledge and skills to practice sports massage alongside gym instructing in the health club environment
- Learners may also broaden their knowledge and skills by progressing to Level 2 qualifications in Instructing Circuits, Exercise to Music and Aqua

### **Links to National Occupational Standards**

There are direct links to the NOS in Instructing Exercise and Fitness:

A355 Reflect on and develop own practice in providing exercise and physical activity

C22 Promote health, safety and welfare in active leisure and recreation

C316 Work with clients to help them to adhere to exercise and physical activity

D451 Plan and prepare gym-based exercise

D452 Instruct and supervise gym-based exercise

## Tutors, Assessors and Internal Verifiers

### Required Criteria

#### All Tutors, Assessors and Verifiers must:

- Possess a discipline specific qualification equivalent to the qualification being taught
- Have relevant industry experience
- Demonstrate active involvement in a process of industry relevant Continued Professional Development during the last two years

#### Tutors

Tutors must hold, or be working towards a teaching qualification.

The following are acceptable:

- Level 3 Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTTLS)
- Level 3 Award in Education and Training
- Level 4 Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTTLS)
- Level 4 Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (CTTLS)
- Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training
- Level 5 Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTTLS)
- Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training
- Certificate in Education

#### Assessor

Assessors must hold or be working towards any of the following:

- Level 3 Award in Understanding the Principles and Practices of Assessment or
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement or
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment or
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement, or
- A1 (previously D32, D33)

#### Internal Verifier

Internal verifiers must hold or be working towards any of the following:

- Level 4 Award in Understanding the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice or
- Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice or
- Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice  
or
- V1 (previously D34)

All new assessors and quality assurance staff must be given a clear action plan for achieving the appropriate qualification(s) and should be countersigned by an appropriately qualified individual until the qualification(s) are achieved.

# UK LEVEL 2 (European Qualifications Framework EQF Level 3) Occupational Descriptor

## Occupational Title

Gym Instructor

## Occupational Description

**A fitness instructor's role includes planning, instructing and evaluating gym based inductions and ongoing client/member programmes. They should also assist more qualified instructors in the delivery of personal training programmes. A fitness instructor should also actively encourage potential clients/members to join and adhere to regular exercise programmes, employing appropriate motivational strategies to achieve this.**

## Occupational Roles

The fitness instructor should be involved in:

1. Collecting and checking information relating to individual clients
2. Analysing information relating to individual clients
3. Identifying and agreeing basic short, medium and long term goals
4. Planning, instructing and evaluating safe and appropriate gym based exercise sessions
5. Providing one-to-one or group inductions and general exercise programmes, including the introduction to new equipment where appropriate
6. Selecting relevant exercises and designing appropriate programmes which address safety at all times
7. Producing suitable programme cards for a range of clients/members
8. Suggesting relevant exercise adaptations to allow for individual client differences or needs
9. Using logical and progressive teaching methodologies to introduce a range of exercises in relation to clients goals
10. Selecting and/or correctly demonstrating a variety of cardiovascular and resistance training methods that can be used by clients/members
11. Providing clients/members with general advice on how to progress their individual programmes
12. Observing clients/members at all times in order to correct unsafe technique where required
13. To positively interact and motivate clients/members using appropriate strategies in order to promote retention and adherence to exercise.
14. Acting as a positive role model at all times for all clients/members and staff
15. Proactively developing and maintaining high standards of customer care in order to facilitate the retention of clients/members
16. Promoting healthy activities and related strategies for daily living to clients/members
17. Monitoring maintenance schedules and assisting in the upkeep and cleanliness of the environment and all associated gym equipment
18. Working within the parameters given at Level 2, recognising the standards and professional limitations that this provides, referring to appropriate members of staff for guidance and support

## Occupational Competence

### L2 Gym Instructors should:

1. Be aware of their professional role boundaries as listed.
2. Give guidance to encourage special population clients\* to follow the key safety guidelines and discourage them from anything deemed to be potentially hazardous/contraindicated to enable them to take part in sessions.

\*Special population clients including:

- 14-16 year old young people
- disabled people
- older people (50+)
- Pre and postnatal women

3. Get advice from another appropriate professional if there are any objectives, physical activities or risks that fall outside their professional boundaries or that they do not feel competent to deal with and/or refer on to the appropriate person.

### L2 Fitness Instructors (who do not possess the appropriate special population qualification/s in older adults, pre/ post-natal women and disabled people) should NOT:

1.
  - Be a specialist instructor in the area of special populations, or advertise as such
  - Instruct special population clients 1:1 or in groups on a regular or progressive basis
  - Plan a progressive, long-term special populations exercise or physical activity programme
  - Play any role in exercise or physical activity programming or monitoring in condition management on a 1:1 or group basis. (For this, a Level 3 Exercise Referral qualification is required and for certain conditions, where national occupational standards are in place, a Level 4 qualification).
2. Prescribe any form of exercise session or individual exercise that they have not been trained to deliver/teach effectively.
3. Instruct exercise in disciplines in which they are not qualified or where they do not hold appropriate endorsed training (e.g. a Level 2 fitness instructor should not 'cover' an ETM class or a spinning class if they do not hold the appropriate certificates).
4. Provide prescriptive nutritional advice or develop bespoke individualised nutrition plans for clients.

## Qualification Structure

This qualification comprises of 6 mandatory units

Unit	Unit title	Level	Credits	Unit accreditation number
1	Anatomy and physiology for exercise	2	6	H/600/9013
2	Know how to support clients who take part in exercise and physical activity	2	2	M/600/9015
3	Health, safety and welfare in a fitness environment	2	2	T/600/9016
4	Principles of exercise, fitness and health	2	4	A/600/9017
5	Preparing for gym-based exercise	2	4	F/600/9018
6	Instructing gym-based exercise	2	6	A/600/9020

Successful achievement of all six units must be achieved for the full qualification.



**Unit 1 H/600/9013 Level: 2 Credit Value: 6**  
**Unit Title: Anatomy and physiology for exercise**

Learning outcomes The learner will:	Assessment criteria The learner can:
1. Understand the structure and function of the circulatory system	1.1 Identify the location of the heart 1.2 Describe the function of the heart 1.3 Describe the structure of the heart 1.4 Describe how blood moves through the four chambers of the heart 1.5 Describe systemic and pulmonary circulation 1.6 Describe the structure and functions of blood vessels 1.7 Define blood pressure 1.8 Identify blood pressure classifications
2. Understand the structure and function of the respiratory system	2.1 Identify the location of the lungs 2.2 Describe the function of the lungs 2.3 Describe the structure of the lungs 2.4 Identify the main muscles involved in breathing 2.5 Describe the passage of air through the respiratory tract 2.6 Describe the process of gaseous exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the Lungs
3. Understand the structure and function of the skeleton	3.1 Describe the basic functions of the skeleton 3.2 Identify the structures of the axial skeleton 3.3 Identify the structures of the appendicular skeleton 3.4 Explain the classification of bones 3.5 Explain the structure of long bone 3.6 Explain the stages of bone growth 3.7 Describe posture in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• curves of the spine</li> <li>• neutral spine alignment</li> <li>• potential ranges of motion of the spine</li> <li>• postural deviations to include kyphosis, lordosis, scoliosis and the effect of Pregnancy</li> </ul>
4. Understand joints in the skeleton	4.1 Describe the classification of joints 4.2 Describe the structure of synovial joints 4.3 Describe the types of synovial joints and their range of motion 4.4 Describe joint movement potential and joint actions
5. Understand the muscular system	5.1 Identify the three types of muscle tissue 5.2 Define the characteristics and functions of the three types of muscle 5.3 Describe the basic structure of skeletal muscle 5.4 Name and locate the anterior skeletal muscles 5.5 Name and locate the posterior skeletal muscles 5.6 Describe the structure and function of the pelvic floor muscles 5.7 Describe the different types of muscle action 5.8 Identify the joint actions brought about by specific muscle groups 5.9 Identify skeletal muscle fibre types and their characteristics

6. Understand the life-course of the musculoskeletal system and its implications for special populations exercise	6.1 Describe the life-course of the musculoskeletal system, including relevant tendon, ligament, muscle, joint and bone mineral density changes, and their implications for exercise, plus specific implications for working with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• young people in the 14-16 age range</li> <li>• antenatal and postnatal women</li> <li>• older people (50 plus)</li> </ul>
7. Understand energy systems and their relation to exercise	7.1 Describe how carbohydrates, fats and proteins are used in the production of energy/adenosine triphosphate 7.2 Explain the use of the three energy systems during aerobic and anaerobic exercise
8. Understand the nervous system and its relation to exercise	8.1 Describe the role and functions of the nervous system 8.2 Describe the principles of muscle contraction 8.3 Describe the 'all or none law'/motor unit recruitment 8.4 Describe how exercise can enhance neuromuscular connections and improve motor fitness
Assessment	Theory paper

**Unit 2 M/600/9015 Level: 2 Credit Value: 2**  
**Unit Title: Know how to support clients who take part in exercise and physical activity**

Learning outcomes The learner will:	Assessment criteria The learner can:
1. Understand how to form effective working relationships with clients	1.1 Explain why it's important to form effective working relationships with clients 1.2 Explain why it's important to present oneself and the organisation positively to clients 1.3 Describe how different communication skills can be used to assist clients with motivation 1.4 Explain the importance of valuing equality and diversity when working with clients
2. Understand how to address barriers to exercise/physical activity that clients experience	2.1 Identify the typical barriers to exercise/physical activity that clients experience Explain how incorporating clients' exercise/physical activity preferences into 2.2 their programme can strengthen motivation and adherence 2.3 Describe different incentives and rewards that can strengthen clients' motivation and adherence 2.4 Describe different strategies that can help clients overcome typical barriers to exercise/physical activity
3. Understand how to support clients to adhere to exercise/physical activity	3.1 Explain why it is important for a client to take personal responsibility for their own fitness and motivation 3.2 Describe how to assist clients to develop their own strategy for motivation and adherence 3.3 Identify different behaviour change approaches/strategies to encourage adherence to exercise/physical activity 3.4 Describe how to set short, medium and long term SMART goals 3.5 Describe how to review and revise short, medium and long term SMART goals
4. Understand how to provide ongoing customer service to clients	4.1 Explain the importance of client care both for the client and the organisation 4.2 Explain why it is important to deal with clients' needs to their satisfaction 4.3 Identify where to source relevant and appropriate information to meet clients' needs 4.4 Explain the importance of dealing with any delay in meeting clients' needs timely and effectively 4.5 Give examples of how to exceed customer expectations, when appropriate 4.6 Explain the importance of handling client complaints positively following an organisation's procedure
Assessment	Client interview Worksheet

**Unit 3 T/600/9016 Level: 2 Credit Value: 2**  
**Unit Title: Health, safety and welfare in a fitness environment**

Learning outcomes The learner will:	Assessment criteria The learner can:
1. Understand emergency procedures in a fitness environment	1.1 Identify the types of emergencies that may occur in a fitness environment 1.2 Describe the roles that different staff and external services play during an emergency 1.3 Explain the importance of following emergency procedures calmly and correctly 1.4 Describe how to maintain the safety of people involved in typical emergencies, including children, older people and disabled people
2. Understand health and safety requirements in a fitness environment	2.1 Outline why health and safety is important in a fitness environment 2.2 Identify the legal and regulatory requirements for health and safety relevant to working in a fitness environment 2.3 Describe Duty of Care and professional role boundaries in relation to special population groups 2.4 Identify the typical roles of individuals responsible for health and safety in a fitness organisation 2.5 Describe the types of security procedures that may apply in a fitness environment 2.6 Describe the key health and safety documents that are relevant in a fitness environment
3. Understand how to control risks in a fitness environment	3.1 Identify possible hazards in a fitness environment, relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• facilities</li> <li>• equipment</li> <li>• working practices, including lifting and handling of equipment</li> <li>• client behaviour</li> <li>• security</li> <li>• hygiene</li> </ul> 3.2 Describe how to risk assess the types of possible hazards in a fitness environment 3.3 Describe how to control risks associated with hazards in a fitness environment 3.4 Identify the appropriate person/position to contact within a fitness organisation when hazards and risks cannot be controlled personally
4. Understand how to safeguard children and vulnerable adults	4.1 Describe what is meant by safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults 4.2 Describe the responsibilities and limitations of a fitness instructor with regard to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults 4.3 Identify the types of abuse which an instructor may encounter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical</li> <li>• emotional</li> <li>• neglect</li> <li>• bullying</li> <li>• sexual</li> </ul> 4.4 Identify possible signs of abuse: physical, emotional, neglect, bullying and sexual 4.5 Describe a fitness organisation's policies and procedures in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, including typical reporting procedures 4.6 Describe the procedures to follow to protect oneself from accusations of abuse 4.7 Identify the statutory agencies responsible for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults 4.8 Explain when it may be necessary to contact statutory agencies 4.9 Describe how to maintain the confidentiality of information relating to possible abuse
Assessment	Worksheet

**Unit 4 A/600/9017 Level: 2 Credit Value: 4**  
**Unit Title: Principles of exercise, fitness and health**

Learning outcomes The learner will:	Assessment criteria The learner can:
1. Understand the effects of exercise on the body	1.1 Describe cardiovascular and respiratory adaptations to endurance/aerobic training 1.2 Identify the short and long term effects of exercise on blood pressure 1.3 Describe the “blood pooling” effect following exercise 1.4 Describe the effects of exercise on bones and joints including the significance of weight-bearing exercise 1.5 Describe delayed onset of muscle soreness (DOMS) 1.6 Identify exercises or techniques likely to cause delayed onset of muscle soreness 1.7 Describe the short and long term effects of different types of exercise on muscle 1.8 Describe different exercises that can improve posture
2. Understand the components of fitness	2.1 Define the components of health-related fitness 2.2 Define the components of skill-related fitness 2.3 Identify the factors that affect health and skill-related fitness
3. Understand how to apply the principles and variables of fitness to an exercise programme	3.1 Describe the physiological implications of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specificity</li> <li>• progressive overload</li> <li>• reversibility</li> <li>• adaptability</li> <li>• individuality</li> <li>• recovery time</li> </ul> 3.2 Explain the principles of FITT (Frequency, Intensity, Time and Type) 3.3 Explain the principles of a progressive training programme in developing components of fitness 3.4 Explain how to recognise when and how to regress a training programme 3.5 Explain the principles of adaptation, modification and progression for each component of FITT (Frequency, Intensity, Time and Type) 3.6 Describe the effect of speed on posture, alignment and intensity 3.7 Describe the effect of levers, gravity and resistance on exercise 3.8 Describe the differences between programming exercise for physical fitness and for health benefits
4. Understand the exercise contraindications and key safety guidelines for special populations	4.1 Describe the exercise contraindications and key safety guidelines for working with older people (50 plus) 4.2 Describe the exercise contraindications and key safety guidelines for working with ante-natal and post-natal clients 4.3 Describe the exercise contraindications and key safety guidelines for working with young people (14-16) 4.4 Describe the key safety considerations for working with disabled people
5. Understand how to safely monitor exercise intensity	5.1 Describe the benefits and limitations of different methods of monitoring exercise intensity including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the talk test</li> <li>• Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE)</li> <li>• heart rate monitoring and the use of different heart rate zones</li> </ul>
6. Understand the health benefits of physical activity	6.1 Describe the health benefits of physical activity 6.2 Describe the effect of physical activity on the causes of certain diseases including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coronary Heart Disease</li> <li>• Some cancers</li> <li>• Type 2 Diabetes</li> <li>• Hypertension</li> <li>• Obesity</li> <li>• Osteoporosis</li> </ul>

7. Understand the importance of healthy eating	<p>7.1 Describe the national food model/guide</p> <p>7.2 Describe key healthy eating advice that underpins a healthy diet</p> <p>7.3 Explain the importance of adequate hydration</p> <p>7.4 Explain professional role boundaries in relation to offering nutritional advice</p> <p>7.5 Explain the dietary role of the key nutrients</p> <p>7.6 Identify the common dietary sources of the key nutrients</p> <p>7.7 Describe the energy balance equation</p> <p>7.8 Explain the health risks of poor nutrition</p>
Assessment	Theory paper

**Unit 5 F/600/9018 Level: 2 Credit Value: 4**  
**Unit Title: Planning gym-based exercise**

Learning outcomes The learner will:	Assessment criteria The learner can:
1. Understand how to collect client information to plan gym-based exercise	1.1 Explain the process of informed consent 1.2 Describe different methods to collect client information, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• questionnaire</li> <li>• interview</li> <li>• observation</li> <li>• physical measurements</li> </ul> 1.3 Describe how to determine which method/s of collecting information are appropriate according to the individual 1.4 Explain the principles of screening clients prior to exercise to include the use of the physical activity readiness questionnaire (PAR-Q)
2. Understand how to use client information to plan gym-based exercise	2.1 Describe the factors, based on client screening, which may affect safe exercise participation 2.2 Identify the reasons for temporary deferral of exercise 2.3 Explain the reasons for referring clients to other professionals
3. Understand how to plan gym-based exercise with clients	3.1 Explain why it is important to agree goals and objectives with clients 3.2 Identify a range of exercises for individual clients to develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cardio-vascular fitness</li> <li>• muscular fitness</li> <li>• flexibility</li> <li>• motor skills</li> </ul> 3.3 Identify a range of cardiovascular and resistance machines, and their uses 3.4 Identify a range of cardiovascular and resistance machines, and their uses 3.5 Describe how to plan gym-based exercise using circuit formats
4. Be able to collect and use client information to plan a gym-based exercise programme	4.1 Use appropriate methods to collect information to enable clients to participate 4.2 Check the information is accurate and up-to-date 4.3 Identify client needs and potential, and any possible risks from participation 4.4 Maintain client confidentiality
5. Be able to plan a safe and effective gym-based exercise programme with clients	5.1 Agree objectives with clients appropriate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• their needs and potential</li> <li>• accepted good practice in the industry</li> <li>• own level of competence</li> </ul> 5.2 Select gym-based exercises that will help clients to develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cardiovascular fitness</li> <li>• muscular fitness</li> <li>• flexibility</li> <li>• motor skills</li> </ul> 5.3 Plan how to minimise any risks relevant to the programme 5.4 Plan realistic timings and sequences for exercise 5.5 Record programme plans in an appropriate format
Assessment	Client Interview Programme Card 4 Session Plans Professional Discussion or Worksheet

**Unit 6 A/600/9020 Level: 2 Credit Value: 6**  
**Unit Title: Instructing gym-based exercise**

Learning outcomes The learner will:	Assessment criteria The learner can:
1. Understand how to provide gym-based exercise	1.1 Identify safe and effective alignment for a range of gym-based exercise positions to cover use of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cardio-vascular machines</li> <li>• resistance machines</li> <li>• free weights</li> </ul> 1.2 Identify different methods of adapting a gym-based exercise programme to ensure appropriate progression and/or regression 1.3 Describe how to develop client co-ordination by building exercises/movements up gradually 1.4 Describe the principles of behaviour management for group inductions
2. Be able to prepare self and equipment for gym-based exercise	2.1 Prepare self to supervise gym-based exercise 2.2 Select equipment for gym-based programmes as appropriate to client needs 2.3 Prepare the environment and equipment as appropriate to client needs
3. Be able to prepare clients for gym-based exercise	3.1 Help clients feel welcome and at ease 3.2 Explain the purpose and value of the exercises, including warm-up and cool-down 3.3 Describe the exercises, including their physical and technical demands 3.4 Confirm or revise plans with clients as appropriate 3.5 Advise clients of the facility's emergency procedures 3.6 Use warm up activities that are safe and effective for the clients
4. Be able to instruct gym-based exercise	4.1 Give explanations and demonstrations that are technically correct (with safe and effective alignment of exercise positions) 4.2 Communicate as appropriate to client needs and the environment
5. Be able to supervise clients undertaking gym-based exercise	5.1 Adopt appropriate positions to observe clients and respond to their needs 5.2 Monitor the safety and intensity of exercise 5.3 Provide feedback and instructing points which are timely, clear and motivational 5.4 Adapt exercises with suitable progressions and regressions according to client needs
6. Be able to bring a gym-based exercise session to an end	6.1 Allow sufficient time to end the session according to clients' level of experience 6.2 Use cool down activities that are safe and effective for the clients 6.3 Give the clients an accurate summary of feedback on the session 6.4 Give the clients the opportunity to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reflect on the session</li> <li>• ask questions</li> <li>• provide feedback</li> <li>• identify further needs</li> </ul> 6.5 Make sure the clients understand how to continue their programme of gym-based exercise without direct supervision 6.6 Leave the environment in a condition acceptable for future use
7. Be able to reflect on providing gym-based exercise	7.1 Review the outcomes of working with clients and client feedback 7.2 Identify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how well the exercises met client needs</li> <li>• how effective and motivational the relationship with the client was</li> <li>• how well the instructing style matched the clients' needs</li> </ul> 7.3 Identify how to improve personal practice 7.4 Explain the value of reflective practice
8. Be able to support clients taking part in gym-based exercise	8.1 Present a positive image of self and organisation to clients 8.2 Establish an effective working relationship with clients 8.3 Communicate with clients in a way that makes them feel valued 8.4 Use motivational styles appropriate to the client and the exercise format
Assessment	Formative observed session Summative observed session Session self-evaluation





Active IQ

Westminster House  
The Anderson Centre  
Ermine Business Park  
Huntingdon PE29 6XY

T 01480 467 950  
F 01480 456 283  
info@activeiq.co.uk  
www.activeiq.co.uk

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