



Qualification Specification

Qualification summary

Qualification title	Active IQ Level 3 Diploma in Supporting Clients with Long-term Conditions
Ofqual qualification number (QN)	603/5836/1
Guided learning hours (GLH)	296
Total qualification time (TQT)	674
Minimum age	16
Qualification purpose	The purpose of this qualification is to provide learners with the knowledge and skills necessary to be able to support clients living with a range of one or more long-term condition(s), by encouraging them to lead healthier, more active lives to better manage their symptoms through effective behaviour-change techniques, lifestyle advice and safe and effective exercise prescription.
Grading	Achieved/not yet achieved
Assessment method	Internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence.
Work/industry placement experience	Work/industry placement experience is not required.
Occupational standards	The qualification is underpinned by the overarching professional standards for: • The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) Learning and Development Requirements (LDR): ○ Working with People with Long-term Conditions.
Performance points	Please check the performance points data produced by the Department for Education (DfE) and available online.
Regulation information	This is a regulated qualification. The regulated number for this qualification is 603/5836/1.
Funding	This qualification may be eligible for funding. For further guidance on funding, please contact your local funding provider.
Document version number	AIQ007273

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Section 1: introduction

Centres must ensure they are using the most recent version of the Qualification Specification on the website.

Aims and objectives

This qualification aims to:

- focus on the study of supporting clients with long-term conditions
- offer breadth and depth of study, incorporating a key core of knowledge
- provide opportunities to acquire a number of practical and technical skills

Guidance for entry

This qualification is designed for fitness professionals who wish to support clients/participants with physical activity, who have one or more long-term condition(s) and are within the scope of competence, or individuals looking to work in a clinical setting as part of a multi-disciplinary team focused on physical activity for patients with long-term conditions.

Learners wishing to undertake this qualification must have a suitable Level 2 qualification in fitness/gym instructing (not including instructing children), or one of the following:

- a suitable Level 3 qualification in personal training
- Level 3 Diploma in Instructing Pilates Matwork
- Level 3 Diploma in Teaching Yoga

There is also an element of communication (discussing, presenting, reading and writing) involved; learners should therefore have basic skills in communication pitched at Level 1.

Centres are responsible for ensuring that all learners are capable of achieving the learning outcomes (LOs) and complying with the relevant literacy, numeracy, and health and safety requirements.

Learners registered on this qualification should not undertake another qualification at the same level, or with the same/a similar title, as duplication of learning may affect funding eligibility.

Achieving this qualification

To be awarded this qualification, learners are required to successfully achieve **5** mandatory units.

Please refer to the list of units in appendix A for further information.

To achieve this qualification, learners must successfully demonstrate their achievement of all LOs of the units as detailed in this Qualification Specification.

Progression

Learners who achieve this qualification could progress to the following:

- further education:
 - Level 3 Diploma in Personal Training
 - Level 3 Diploma in Sports Massage Therapy

Resource requirements

There are no mandatory resource requirements for this qualification, but centres must ensure learners have access to suitable resources to enable them to cover all the appropriate LOs.

Realistic work environment (RWE) requirement/recommendation

This qualification is designed to prepare learners to work and gain employment within a real working environment. As such, there is an expectation that practical activities and all observed assessments are conducted within a real working environment. Where this is not feasible, a realistic work environment (RWE) must be used. This approach ensures learners develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for employment.

It is essential that any RWE accurately reflects current, authentic working environments. This provides assurance that competence demonstrated in an RWE will transfer effectively to real employment.

In establishing and using an RWE, the following factors must be considered:

The work situation being represented is relevant to the competence requirements being assessed:

- the environment must closely resemble the relevant real working setting
- equipment and resources must be current, appropriate to the sector, and fully available for use
- time constraints, access to resources and availability of information must reflect real working conditions

The learner's work activities reflect those found in the work environment being represented, for example:

- practical activities and observed assessments must reflect real work expectations
- interaction with colleagues, clients, customers or service users must mirror professional communication approaches
- tasks must be completed within realistic timescales expected in employment
- learners must demonstrate the ability to manage a realistic workload
- learners must operate professionally, with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities
- feedback from colleagues, clients, customers or service users should be obtained, responded to and used to inform practice
- all relevant legislation, regulations, policies and standard operating procedures must be followed at all times

How the qualification is assessed

Assessment is the process of measuring a learner's skill, knowledge and understanding against the standards set in a qualification.

This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.

The assessment consists of 1 component:

- an internally assessed portfolio of evidence, which is assessed by centre staff and externally quality assured (internal quality assurance must still be completed by the centre as usual)

Learners must be successful in this component to gain the Level 3 Diploma in Supporting Clients with Long-term Conditions.

Learners who are not successful can resubmit work within the registration period; however, a charge may apply in cases where additional external quality assurance visits are required.

Unless otherwise stated in this specification, all learners taking this qualification must be assessed in English and all assessment evidence presented for external quality assurance must be in English.

Internal assessment

Each learner must create a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate achievement of all the LOs associated with each unit. On completion of each unit, learners must declare that the work produced is their own and the assessor must countersign this.

Section 2: unit content and assessment guidance

This section provides details of the structure and content of this qualification.

The types of evidence listed are for guidance purposes only. Within learners' portfolios, other types of evidence are acceptable if all learning outcomes (LOs) are covered, and if the evidence generated can be internally and externally quality assured. For approval of methods of internal assessment other than portfolio building, please contact your external quality assurer (EQA).

Unit 01 Applied anatomy and physiology for exercise, health and fitness (F/615/4012)

Assessment			
This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.			
Mandatory	Achieved/not yet achieved	Level 3	32 GLH

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	Assessment criteria (AC) The learner can:
1. Know the structure and function of the cardiovascular system in relation to health and fitness	1.1 Describe the structures of the heart and their functions, including: - chambers - valves - blood vessels
	1.2 List the order in which blood flows through the cardiovascular system
	1.3 Explain the stages of progression in atherosclerosis
	1.4 Describe the immediate blood pressure response to exercise, to include: the Valsalva manoeuvre
	1.5 Describe the effects of different forms of exercise training on blood pressure over time
	1.6 Identify the blood pressure classifications and associated health risks
	1.7 Describe the cardiovascular benefits and adaptations to different forms of exercise, to include: - endurance training - interval training - resistance training - relaxation training
2. Know the structure and function of the skeletal system structure in relation to health and fitness	2.1 Identify the anatomical planes of motion for different joint actions and exercises
	2.2 Identify the joint actions and typical ranges of movement of the major joints of the body
	2.3 Describe the benefits and risks of weight-bearing exercise for the bones and joints
	2.4 Describe the common injury risks at each of the major joints and the movements that are likely to cause them
	2.5 Explain common postural patterns, their associated muscle imbalances and the problems these can cause
	2.6 Describe the relationship between the structure and function of the skeleton
3. Know the structure and function of the myofascial system in relation to health and fitness	3.1 Describe the structure and function of muscle fibres and their components
	3.2 Describe the stages of the sliding filament theory
	3.3 Describe the effects of exercise intensity and duration on muscle fibre recruitment and adaptation by the different muscle fibre types
	3.4 Name the locations of the attachment sites for the major muscles of the body
	3.5 Explain the isolated muscle actions responsible for producing specific body movements
	3.6 Explain the roles of muscles in integrated movements of the body compared to their isolated muscle actions
	3.7 Identify causative factors, symptoms and recovery strategies for delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS)
	3.8 Describe the structure and functions of the different types of connective tissue

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	Assessment criteria (AC) The learner can:
4. Know the structure and function of the nervous system in relation to health and fitness	4.1 Describe the components of the nervous system, to include: • central nervous system • peripheral nervous system • somatic branch of the peripheral nervous system • autonomic branch of the peripheral nervous system
	4.2 Describe the structure and function of a neuron
	4.3 Describe the structure and function of a motor unit
	4.4 State the 'all or nothing' law of muscle contraction and the size principle of motor unit recruitment
	4.5 Explain the stages in the process of the stretch reflex and inverse stretch reflex
	4.6 Describe the structure and function of muscle spindles
	4.7 Describe the structure and function of golgi tendon organs
	4.8 Explain the definition and function of autogenic inhibition
	4.9 Explain the definition and function of reciprocal inhibition
	4.10 Explain the neuromuscular adaptations associated with different types of exercise and their benefits for performance
5. Know the structure and function of the endocrine system in relation to health and fitness	5.1 Describe the role of the endocrine system
	5.2 Recognise the location, structure and functions of the endocrine glands of the body
	5.3 Describe the main functions of hormones in the body, to include: • growth hormone • thyroid hormones • corticosteroids • catecholamines • insulin • glucagon
	5.4 Explain the lifestyle factors that affect endocrine health
6. Understand the role of the energy systems in relation to physical activity, exercise and training	6.1 Describe the energy substrates and by-products of each energy system
	6.2 Explain the processes by which adenosine triphosphate (ATP) is re-synthesised in each energy system
	6.3 Explain the relative contribution of each energy system to total energy expended in activities with different characteristics, to include: • intensity • duration • type
7. Know the structure and function of the digestive system in relation to health and fitness	7.1 Describe the structure of each section of the gastrointestinal tract in relation to its functions
	7.2 Describe the location and functions of each of the digestive organs
	7.3 Explain the role of the digestive system in maintaining health
	7.4 Explain the implications of different dietary practices for the digestive system
	7.5 Explain the importance of physical activity for digestive system health

Unit 02 The health landscape (A/618/1094)

Assessment			
This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.			
Mandatory	Achieved/not yet achieved	Level 3	21 GLH

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	Assessment criteria (AC) The learner can:
1. Understand the prevalence of long-term conditions in the UK	1.1 Explain what is meant by a long-term condition
	1.2 Describe the prevalence of people living with long-term conditions
	1.3 Describe the socio-economic impact of the increasing number of people living with long-term conditions
2. Understand the prevalence of lifestyle behaviours associated with long-term conditions	2.1 Describe the prevalence of lifestyle behaviours associated with long-term conditions, to include: • physical inactivity • poor diet • stress • sleep deprivation • smoking and drugs • alcohol misuse
3. Understand the socio-demographic causes of long-term conditions in the UK	3.1 Describe the World Health Organization's determinants of health
	3.2 Compare local and national health inequalities and how they correlate with lifestyle behaviours
	3.3 Analyse the statistics that relate to the ageing population of the UK
	3.4 Explain why the UK has an ageing population
	3.5 Outline the long-term conditions commonly associated with ageing
4. Understand the ageing process and the implications for health and well-being	3.6 Explain the socio-economic impact of an ageing population
	4.1 Explain the physiological changes associated with ageing, to include: • musculoskeletal • cardiorespiratory • neurological
	4.2 Explain how ageing can affect functional capacity and independence

Unit 03 Managing long-term conditions(F/618/1095)

Assessment			
This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.			
Mandatory	Achieved/not yet achieved	Level 4	111 GLH

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	Assessment criteria (AC) The learner can:
1. Understand the aetiology of the most prevalent long-term conditions	1.1 Outline the prevalence of a range of long-term conditions in the UK, to include: • diabetes and metabolic conditions • cardiorespiratory conditions • musculoskeletal conditions • mental health conditions • cancers • neurological conditions • chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) • dementia-related conditions • hypo/hyperthyroidism
	1.2 Describe the aetiology, pathology and signs and symptoms of the long-term conditions identified in 1.1
	1.3 Describe medical terminology that is pertinent to the long-term conditions identified in 1.1
2. Understand common comorbidities and multimorbidities	2.1 Explain what is meant by comorbidities and multimorbidities
	2.2 Identify common comorbidities and multimorbidities and their prevalence
	2.3 Outline the impact of comorbidities and multimorbidities on health outcomes
	2.4 Describe the challenges associated with the management of comorbidities and multimorbidities
3. Understand the medical management of long-term conditions	3.1 Describe medications that are prescribed to manage the long-term conditions identified in 1.1, to include: • action • side effects • precautions
	3.2 Describe surgical interventions that are administered to manage the long-term conditions identified in 1.1
	3.3 Describe how medication and surgical interventions can impact quality of life, functional and mental capacity and exercise tolerance
4. Understand the lifestyle management of long-term medical conditions	4.1 Describe the benefits of lifestyle changes that are recommended to manage the long-term conditions identified in 1.1
	4.2 Explain the exercise limitations associated with the long-term conditions identified in 1.1, including: • functional • cognitive • biopsychosocial
	4.3 Explain the physiology and psychology of pain and how this may impact the functional and mental capacity of an individual
	4.4 Explain the importance of positive mental health and well-being when working with clients with long-term conditions
5. Understand the risk factors associated with physical activity for clients with long-term conditions	5.1 Describe the relative and absolute contraindications associated with physical activity
	5.2 Describe the signs and symptoms associated with long-term conditions, which could put clients at risk during a physical activity session

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	Assessment criteria (AC) The learner can:
	5.3 Describe the appropriate action that should be taken when clients present with the signs and symptoms identified in 5.2 during a physical activity session

Unit 04 Behaviour change for clients with long-term conditions (L/618/1097)

Assessment			
This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.			
Mandatory	Achieved/not yet achieved	Level 3	69 GLH

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	Assessment criteria (AC) The learner can:
1. Understand behaviour-change theories and techniques	1.1 Describe a range of behaviour-change theories, for example: • health belief model • self-determination theory • transtheoretical model (TTM) • COM-B
	1.2 Describe the communication skills involved in effective behaviour change, to include: • building a rapport • listening • questioning • reflective statements • paraphrasing • summarising • use of silence
	1.3 Describe a range of behaviour-change techniques, for example: • motivational interviewing • solution-focused brief therapy • cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) • positive psychology
	1.4 Carry out research linking behaviour change with increases in physical activity
	1.5 Describe emerging trends and initiatives that support behaviour change in relation to increases in physical activity
	1.6 Explain how to structure and deliver a consultation that facilitates behaviour change
	1.7 Explain how behaviour-change techniques can be adapted to support both individuals and groups
	1.8 Compare the evidence for face-to-face and remote behaviour-change support
	1.9 Explain how face-to-face and remote behaviour-change techniques can be combined to best support clients with long-term conditions
	1.10 Describe the common barriers for clients with long-term conditions to changing their lifestyle behaviour
	1.11 Describe the motivators that could support clients with long-term conditions in changing their lifestyle behaviour
	1.12 Describe common goals for clients with long-term conditions
	1.13 Explain how to translate common client goals into appropriate SMART goals
2. Understand current lifestyle advice and how to educate people with long-term conditions	2.1 Outline recognised physical activity guidelines for healthy individuals and those with long-term conditions, to include: • Public Health England physical activity guidelines • NICE clinical guidelines
	2.2 Outline recommendations for other lifestyle behaviours, to include: • healthy eating • smoking cessation

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	Assessment criteria (AC) The learner can:
	2.3 Explain how to educate clients on the principles of self-management, so they can maintain positive behaviour change beyond the programme
3. Understand pre-exercise screening and assessment for people living with long-term conditions	3.1 Explain the importance of pre-exercise screening and informed consent
	3.2 Describe a range of pre-exercise screening methodologies, for example: • PAR-Q • PAR-Q+ • condition-specific screening tools
	3.3 Describe a range of physical, functional and clinical assessments for people with long-term conditions
	3.4 Describe the information that should be collected as part of pre-exercise screening and assessment
	3.5 Describe a range of risk stratification tools, for example: • ACSM • Irwin and Morgan • condition-specific risk stratification tools
4. Be able to collect client information as part of a consultation, including: • health screening • physical, functional and clinical assessments • goal setting	4.1 Interpret medical/clinical information from referring health professionals
	4.2 Collect detailed and accurate screening information, to include: • health screening • informed consent • lifestyle behaviours • condition-specific information, for example: ○ medication ○ surgery ○ stage/severity
	4.3 Risk stratify clients based on the information collected
	4.4 Select and conduct safe and appropriate physical, functional and/or clinical assessments
	4.5 Interpret the results of assessments into meaningful information
	4.6 Agree goals with clients that are SMART and relate to their condition(s)

Unit 05 Planning and adapting physical activity for clients with long-term conditions (M/618/1108)

Assessment			
This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.			
Mandatory	Achieved/not yet achieved	Level 3	63 GLH

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	Assessment criteria (AC) The learner can:
1. Understand how to plan a physical activity programme for clients with long-term conditions	1.1 Describe how to adapt physical activity sessions for a range of environments, for example: - gym - individuals' homes - community halls - outdoor spaces
	1.2 Explain the safety considerations when working in a range of environments
	1.3 Describe a range of equipment that can be used to deliver physical activity sessions
	1.4 Describe a range of activity types that can be incorporated into physical activity sessions
2. Understand how to monitor and adapt physical activity programmes for clients with long-term conditions	2.1 Describe how to select appropriate monitoring methods, to include: - talk test - heart rate - rate of perceived exertion (RPE) - observation - questioning techniques
	2.2 Explain the benefits and limitations of using the monitoring methods identified in 3.1 for a range of long-term conditions
	2.3 Explain how to monitor participant progress throughout a physical activity programme
	2.4 Explain how to adapt a physical activity programme
3. Be able to plan physical activity programmes for clients with long-term conditions	3.1 Plan safe and effective physical activity programmes that: - are appropriate to the client's long-term condition(s) and medication - consider the pre-exercise consultation information collected, including screening, physical assessments, barriers and goals - are consistent with accepted good practice and recognised guidelines
	3.2 Identify the activities, equipment and environment(s) required to deliver physical activity programmes
	3.3 Carry out appropriate risk assessments on the activities, equipment and environment
	3.4 Identify and prescribe physical activity opportunities that are not part of the one-to-one programme, which align with the client's motivators
	3.5 Prescribe activities of daily living that will support the client in improving his/her health and well-being
4. Understand the scope of practice of exercise professionals when working with clients with long-term conditions	4.1 Describe the roles and responsibilities of exercise professionals working with clients with long-term conditions
	4.2 Describe the roles of other health professionals involved in supporting clients with long-term conditions, for example: - clinicians - referring professionals - dieticians

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	Assessment criteria (AC) The learner can:
	• health trainers • managers/co-ordinators
	4.3 Describe the scope of practice of exercise professionals when working with people with long-term conditions
	4.4 Explain when, and to whom, participants should be referred when they are out of scope of practice
	4.5 Explain when exercise should be deferred
	4.6 Describe industry codes of conduct in relation to working with clients with long-term conditions
	4.7 Describe the insurance requirements when working with clients with long-term conditions
5. Understand continuing professional development opportunities when working with clients with long-term conditions	5.1 Explain the importance of continuing professional development when working with clients with long-term conditions
	5.2 Describe continuing professional development opportunities for exercise professionals working with clients with long-term conditions

Assessment strategy

The key requirements of the assessment strategies or principles that relate to units in this qualification are summarised below.

The centre must ensure that individuals undertaking assessor or quality assurer roles within the centre conform to the assessment requirements for the unit they are assessing or quality assuring.

Knowledge LOs

- assessors will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make assessment decisions
- internal quality assurers (IQAs) will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make quality assurance decisions

Competence/skills LOs

- assessors will need to be both occupationally competent and qualified to make assessment decisions
- IQAs will need to be both occupationally knowledgeable and qualified to make quality assurance decisions

The centre with whom the learners are registered will be responsible for making all assessment decisions. Assessors must be **contracted** to work directly with the centre, contributing to all aspects of standardisation. The centre must ensure a process of training is followed, including during induction and quality assurance activities. Occupationally competent and qualified assessors from the centre must use direct observation to assess practical skills-based outcomes.

Section 3: support

Support materials

The resources and materials used in the delivery of this qualification must be age-appropriate and due consideration should be given to the wellbeing and safeguarding of learners in line with your institute's safeguarding policy when developing or selecting delivery materials.

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Document version history

Version	Publication date	Description of change
AIQ005843	April 2020	Document published
AIQ007273	August 2026	Updates made to assessment method; the units are assessed by an internally assessed and externally quality

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Appendix A: units

To simplify cross-referencing assessments and quality assurance, we have used a sequential numbering system in this document for each unit.

Mandatory units

Unit number	Regulated unit number	Unit title	Level	GLH
Unit 01	F/615/4012	Applied anatomy and physiology for exercise, health and fitness	3	32
Unit 02	A/618/1094	The health landscape	3	21
Unit 03	F/618/1095	Managing long-term conditions	4	111
Unit 04	L/618/1097	Behaviour change for clients with long-term conditions	3	69
Unit 05	M/618/1108	Planning and adapting physical activity for clients with long-term conditions	3	63