NCFE Active IQ Level 1 Award in Fitness and Physical Activity
QN: 601/4120/7



Qualification Specification

Qualification summary

Qualification title	**NCFE Active IQ Level 1 Award in Fitness and Physical Activity**
Ofqual qualification number (QN)	601/4120/7
Guided learning hours (GLH)	60
Total qualification time (TQT)	90
Credit value	9
Minimum age	14
Qualification purpose	This qualification will allow individuals to gain the underpinning knowledge and skills required to assist in leading safe and effective exercise sessions. It will also allow them to explore career opportunities within the active leisure sector, whilst also gaining an understanding of healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle.
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.
Performance points	Please check the performance points data produced by the Department for Education (DfE) available online.
Regulation information	This is a regulated qualification. The regulated number for this qualification is 601/4120/7.
Funding	This qualification may be eligible for funding. For further guidance on funding, please contact your local funding provider.

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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 provide learners with an introduction to:

- the principles of exercise and fitness
- the health and fitness industry
- healthy eating.

Support Handbook

This Qualification Specification must be used alongside the mandatory Support Handbook, which can be found on the NCFE website. This contains additional supporting information to help with planning, delivery and assessment.

This Qualification Specification contains all the qualification-specific information you will need that is not covered in the Support Handbook.

Guidance for entry

This qualification is designed for individuals considering or wishing to progress to a career in the fitness industry.

Registration is at the discretion of the centre in accordance with equality legislation and should be made on the NCFE Portal.

There are no specific prior skills or knowledge a learner must have for this qualification. However, learners may find it helpful to have basic communication skills, including discussing, presenting, reading, and writing, pitched at level 2.

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 **three mandatory units** from Group A (**6 credits**), a minimum of **1 credit** from Group B and **2 credits** from Group C to make up the minimum of **9 credits** in total for the full award.

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. A partial certificate may be requested for learners who do not achieve the full qualification but have achieved at least one whole unit; partial achievement certificate fees can be found in the Fees and Pricing document on the website.

Progression

Learners who achieve this qualification could progress to the following:

- further education:
  - NCFE Active IQ Level 2 Certificate in Leading Health-Related Activity Sessions.

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

The assessment of competence-based criteria should ideally be conducted within the workplace. However, in instances where this is not feasible, learners can be assessed in a realistic work environment (RWE) designed to replicate real work settings.

It is essential for organisations utilising an RWE to ensure it accurately reflects current and authentic work environments. By doing so, employers can be confident that competence demonstrated by a learner in an RWE will be translated into successful performance in employment.

In establishing an RWE, the following factors should be considered.

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

- the work situation should closely resemble the relevant setting
- equipment and resources that replicate the work situation must be current and available for use to ensure that assessment requirements can be met
- time constraints, resource access and information availability should mirror real conditions.

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

- interaction with colleagues and others should reflect expected communication approaches
- tasks performed must be completed to an acceptable timescale
- learners must be able to achieve a realistic volume of work as would be expected in the work situation being represented
- learners operate professionally with clear understanding of their work activities and responsibilities
- feedback from colleagues and others (for example, customers, service users) is maintained and acted upon
- account must be taken of any legislation, regulations or standard procedures that would be followed in the workplace.

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 **one** component:

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

Learners must be successful in this component to gain the Level 1 Award in Fitness and Physical Activity.

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 generated from appropriate assessment tasks 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.

If a centre needs to create their own internal assessment tasks, there are four essential elements in the production of successful centre-based assessment tasks; these are:

- ensuring the assessment tasks are meaningful with clear, assessable outcomes
- appropriate coverage of the content, LOs or assessment criteria (AC)
- having a valid and engaging context or scenario
- including sufficient opportunities for stretch and challenge for higher attainers.

Section 2: unit content and assessment guidance

This section provides details of the structure and content of this qualification including grading, level, credit and guided learning hours (GLH).

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 Participate in physical activity in the fitness environment (K/600/9370)

Assessment				
This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.				
Mandatory	**Achieved/not yet achieved**	**Level 1**	**2 credits**	**10 GLH**

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	**Assessment criteria (AC)** The learner can:
1. Know the structure of a health-related exercise session	1.1 Describe the structure of a health-related exercise session
	1.2 Demonstrate appropriate activities or exercises
	1.3 Give examples of different exercises and activities
2. Understand the importance of safe and effective exercise technique	2.1 Identify good and poor exercise technique
	2.2 Demonstrate good exercise technique
3. Know the skills and qualities required by a fitness instructor	3.1 List the skills and qualities needed by a fitness instructor to deliver a safe and effective exercise session
	3.2 Identify the skills and qualities of a fitness instructor

Unit 02 Exercise and fitness knowledge (J/601/0011)

Assessment				
This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.				
Mandatory	**Achieved/not yet achieved**	**Level 1**	**2 credits**	**10 GLH**

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	**Assessment criteria (AC)** The learner can:
1. Understand anatomy and physiology in the context of health-related exercise	1.1 Identify the structure and function of the body in relation to exercise and fitness
	1.2 Identify the effects of exercise and fitness on systems of the body
2. Understand the components of physical fitness	2.1 Define health, exercise, physical activity and fitness and the differences between them
	2.2 List the components of total fitness and physical fitness
	2.3 Define the principles of training

Unit 03 Exploring personal fitness (Y/601/0014)

Assessment				
This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.				
Mandatory	**Achieved/not yet achieved**	**Level 1**	**2 credits**	**10 GLH**

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	**Assessment criteria (AC)** The learner can:
1. Be able to understand and use tests to determine levels of physical activity	1.1 Perform a variety of tests to determine current levels of physical fitness
2. Be able to plan and produce a Personal Exercise Programme (PEP)	2.1 Plan a Personal Exercise Programme (PEP)
	2.2 Participate in and evaluate the PEP

Unit 04 Assist in the delivery of an exercise session (J/600/4256)

Assessment				
This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.				
Optional	**Achieved/not yet achieved**	**Level 1**	**2 credits**	**10 GLH**

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	**Assessment criteria (AC)** The learner can:
1. Know the basic principles of leading a safe and effective exercise session	1.1 List the basic principles of leading a safe and effective exercise session
2. Be able to assist in leading a safe and effective exercise session	2.1 Demonstrate the skills required to assist in leading a safe and effective exercise session

Unit 05 Understanding the health and fitness industry (R/600/4566)

Assessment				
This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.				
Optional	**Achieved/not yet achieved**	**Entry Level 3**	**1 credit**	**10 GLH**

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	**Assessment criteria (AC)** The learner can:
1. Know the features of the health and fitness industry	1.1 List the different places where fitness activities can take place
	1.2 List the different reasons why people go to a fitness facility or leisure centre
	1.3 List the different activities that can take place in a fitness facility or leisure centre
2. Know employment and career opportunities in the health and fitness industry	2.1 List the possible jobs available in the health and fitness industry
	2.2 Identify the professional requirements of working in the health and fitness industry
3. Know the features of professional behaviour in the health and fitness industry	3.1 Outline the different aspects of being a professional health and fitness instructor
	3.2 State what is needed to apply for a job
	3.3 List a range of requirements that your employer must meet

Unit 06 Healthy eating (K/502/3355)

Assessment				
This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.				
Optional	**Achieved/not yet achieved**	**Level 1**	**2 credits**	**20 GLH**

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	**Assessment criteria (AC)** The learner can:
1. Understand the importance of maintaining a balanced diet	1.1 Describe why a balanced diet is important in leading a healthy lifestyle
	1.2 Describe the impact of a poor diet on an individual's health
	1.3 Identify the main food groups needed to maintain a balanced diet
	1.4 Plan and make a balanced healthy meal or packed lunch
2. Understand the dietary needs of different groups	2.1 Identify two different groups that have specific dietary needs and describe what these needs are
	2.2 Produce a healthy eating plan for one day for an individual with specific dietary needs

Unit 07 Healthy eating in personal development (A/501/3994)

Assessment				
This qualification is internally assessed and externally quality assured.				
Optional	**Achieved/not yet achieved**	**Level 2**	**2 credits**	**20 GLH**

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	**Assessment criteria (AC)** The learner can:
1. Understand the importance of maintaining a balanced diet	1.1 Describe why a balanced diet is an important factor in leading a healthy lifestyle
	1.2 Identify the main food groups needed by the human body for optimum health
	1.3 Describe the characteristics of an unhealthy diet and of poor eating habits
	1.4 Explain the impact of a poor diet on health and fitness
	1.5 Produce a healthy eating plan for one week for own situation
2. Understand how media representations of body image may influence eating habits	2.1 Explain what is meant by 'body image'
	2.2 Explain how and why the media portrayal of body image may impact negatively on an individual's health
3. Understand the dietary choices and needs of different groups	3.1 Explain how religion and culture can affect dietary choices and needs
	3.2 Explain how to meet the nutritional needs of a person with a particular religious or cultural belief
	3.3 Explain how certain factors may impact on dietary needs: • a medical condition • age • gender • occupation.
	3.4 Produce a healthy eating plan for one day for an individual with specific dietary needs

NCFE 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 following support materials are available to assist with the delivery of this qualification and are available on the NCFE website:

- learning resources
- Qualification Factsheet.

Other 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.

Products to support the delivery of this qualification may be available. For more information about these resources and how to access them, please visit the NCFE website.

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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

Group A

Unit number	Regulated unit number	Unit title	Level	Credit	GLH
Unit 01	K/600/9370	Participate in physical activity in the fitness environment	1	2	10
Unit 02	J/601/0011	Exercise and fitness knowledge	1	2	10
Unit 03	Y/601/0014	Exploring personal fitness	1	2	10

Optional units

Group B

Unit number	Regulated unit number	Unit title	Level	Credit	GLH
Unit 04	J/600/4256	Assist in the delivery of an exercise session	1	2	10
Unit 05	R/600/4566	Understanding the health and fitness industry	Entry Level 3	1	10

Group C

Unit number	Regulated unit number	Unit title	Level	Credit	GLH
Unit 06	K/502/3355	Heathy eating	1	2	20
Unit 07	A/501/3994	Healthy eating in personal development	2	2	20

Change history record

Version	Publication date	Description of change
AIQ004508	November 2016	Document published
AIQ007202	May 2026	Updates made to assessment method; the units are assessed by an internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence. AC 1.1 'Explore the structure of a health-related exercise session' changed to 'Describe the structure of a health-related exercise session'.
v2.0	November 2026	Qualification title changed and template updated to new version.