NCFE Active IQ Level 1 Award in Active, Healthy Living
QN: 500/7855/0



Qualification Specification

Version 2.0 November 2026

Qualification summary

Qualification title	**NCFE Active IQ Level 1 Award in Active, Healthy Living**
Ofqual qualification number (QN)	500/7855/0
Guided learning hours (GLH)	78
Total qualification time (TQT)	92
Minimum age	14
Qualification purpose	This qualification is designed for school leavers and those returning to education, including those considering a career in the fitness industry and anyone wishing to improve their knowledge of activity and exercise and wanting to adopt a healthier lifestyle for themselves.
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.
Endorsement	This qualification is endorsed by CIMSPA (Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity). CIMSPA Endorsed 10 CIMSPA CPD POINTS
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 500/7855/0.
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:

- explain the links between activity and better health in order to demonstrate the opportunities within daily life to become more active
- focus on the study of the health sector
- offer breadth and depth of study, incorporating a key core of knowledge.

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 school leavers and those returning to education, including those considering a career in the fitness industry and anyone wishing to improve their knowledge of activity and exercise and wanting to adopt a healthier lifestyle for themselves.

It may also be useful to learners studying qualifications in the following sectors:

- sport
- fitness.

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/knowledge a learner must have for this qualification. However, learners may find it helpful if they have already achieved an entry level qualification.

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 **two** 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. 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:
  - health and fitness qualifications
  - instructing exercise qualifications
  - nutrition and exercise performance qualifications.

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 Active, Healthy Living.

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 How the body works (T/600/2549)

Assessment			
Internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence			
Mandatory	**Achieved/not yet achieved**	**Level 1**	**28 GLH**

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	**Assessment criteria (AC)** The learner can:
1. Know the structure and function of the skeletal system	1.1 Identify the bones in the human body
	1.2 Outline the functions of the skeleton
	1.3 Outline the structure of the skeletal system
2. Know the structure and function of the muscular system	2.1 Identify the location of the main skeletal muscles
	2.2 Outline the structure of the muscular system
	2.3 Outline the functions of the muscular system
3. Outline a balanced approach to nutrition and the types of fuels used to provide energy for activity	3.1 Describe why a balanced approach to nutrition and activity is beneficial
	3.2 Identify the different nutrient groups
	3.3 Identify the daily intake of nutrients required by the body
	3.4 Identify the types of fuels used to provide energy for activity
4. Know the structure and function of the cardio-respiratory system	4.1 Identify the main function of the lungs
	4.2 Define the structure of the lungs
	4.3 Identify the main function of the heart
	4.4 Define the structure of the heart

Unit 02 How to adopt an active, healthy lifestyle (K/600/2547)

Assessment			
Internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence			
Mandatory	**Achieved/not yet achieved**	**Level 1**	**50 GLH**

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	**Assessment criteria (AC)** The learner can:
1. Understand the principles of active, healthy living	1.1 List the types of activities and exercises that help maintain physical health and fitness
	1.2 Identify physiological changes that take place in the body when working at the following intensities: • low • moderate • high.
	1.3 Research exercise/activities that are of interest to them
	1.4 Describe the benefits of leading an active healthy lifestyle
	1.5 Describe the different health conditions linked to: • inactive lifestyles • poor nutrition • factors affecting health which could include, for example: ○ smoking ○ alcoholism ○ osteoporosis ○ obesity ○ stress.
	1.6 State the risk factors for coronary heart disease
2. Understand the health and safety considerations when taking part in physical activity	2.1 List the health and safety considerations when preparing to take part in physical activity
	2.2 Describe how to make safe and effective physical activity choices
	2.3 Identify the purpose of a Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PARQ) screening form
3. Know the principles of training	3.1 List the five components of physical fitness
	3.2 Identify current national guidelines for physical fitness
	3.3 Outline the principles of training to include: • specificity • progression • overload • reversibility • adaptation.
4. Know how to incorporate different types of activity into everyday life	4.1 List the different types of activity that can be incorporated into daily life

Learning outcomes (LOs) The learner will:	**Assessment criteria (AC)** The learner can:
5. Understand the main components of an activity session	5.1 Identify the purpose of a: • warm up • main session • cool down.
	5.2 Outline the basic structure of the following: • warm up • main session • cool down.
	5.3 State the differences between static and dynamic stretching
	5.4 Give examples of the advantages and disadvantages for static and dynamic stretching
	5.5 Outline methods of resistance training
	5.6 Define the number of sets and repetitions required to achieve muscular strength and/or endurance
	5.7 State appropriate exercise selection to achieve muscular balance
	5.8 Identify methods of monitoring intensity to include: • observation • talk test • heart rate • Revised Borg Scale.
6. Create a personal health and activity plan	6.1 Record their personal information onto a health and lifestyle questionnaire
	6.2 Identify nutritional changes to their dietary intake based on the findings of their food diaries
	6.3 Plan and record a 4-week overview of personal exercise and activity
7. Plan and demonstrate an activity session	7.1 Plan a detailed activity session to include: • warm up • main session • cool down.
	7.2 Demonstrate one full activity session utilising correct technique containing: • warm up • main session.
8. Reflect on the effectiveness of the personal health and activity log (PAL)	8.1 Review the safety and effectiveness of the sessions
	8.2 Identify how motivational the sessions were
	8.3 Identify any nutritional changes made to their daily diet
	8.4 Outline the long-term changes/adaptations that they could make to their exercise/activity sessions

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

Unit number	Regulated unit number	Unit title	Level	GLH
Unit 01	T/600/2549	How the body works	1	28
Unit 02	K/600/2547	How to adopt an active, healthy lifestyle	1	50

Change history record

Version	Publication date	Description of change
AIQ004505	November 2016	Document published
AIQ007193	May 2026	Updates made to assessment methods; both units are assessed by an internally assessed and externally quality assured portfolio of evidence. TQT increased from 90 to 92.
v2.0	November 2026	Qualification title changed and template updated to new version.