

EUROPEAN

STANDARDS

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EuropeActive Occupational Standards Summary Document

Personal Trainer (EQF Level 4)

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Personal Trainer

Definition

A personal trainer's role is exercise training through the design and provision of personalised exercise programmes for fitness users in different environments. This includes detailed consultation, health screening and fitness assessment, user-specific programme design, one-to-one or small group training, monitoring and evaluation of exercise programme effectiveness and other additional fitness- and lifestyle-related support relevant to goal achievement. A personal trainer actively encourages users to adhere to regular exercise/physical activity, to pursue a healthier lifestyle, and by employing appropriate motivational tools to support the behavioural change process.

Scope

A personal trainer works with apparently healthy and low risk adult populations. This occupation is informally referenced to the European Qualification Framework (EQF) level 4.

Specific pre-requisites

EQF Level 3 Fitness Instructor or equivalent accreditation certification.

Level of entry on to EREPS

Level 4

Technical expert group members and external consultation experts

These standards were fully adopted within the process of external consultation and afterwards approved by the EuropeActive Professional Standards Committee.

Technical Expert Group (2011):

- *Prof. Alfonso Jiménez (EHFA, Spain) - TEG Leader (and Chairman of EHFA Standards Council 2011)*
- *Ben Gittus (SkillsActive, UK)*
- *Margarida Manz (Manz Produções, Portugal)*
- *Matthias Guett (EOSE, Lyon, France)*
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- *Niki Keene (Curves International)*
- *Pernilla Ohlsson (PT School, Sweden)*
- *Richard Earney (Aspria, Belgium).*
- *Susanne Björklund (SAFE, SATS, Sweden)*
- *Xavier Martins (Les Mills International)*
- *Jean Sadouni, Chair of TEG Leaders*
- *Cliff Collins, EREPS Director (Observer)*
- *Irene Van Geest, Vice-Chair EHFA SC (external reviewer)*

Technical Expert Group (2017):

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- *Alfonso Jiménez, PhD, Coventry University / Go Fit (UK / Spain)*
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- *Francesco Bertiato, Technogym (Italy)*
- *Julian Berriman, MA, EuropeActive (UK)*
- *Lou Atkinson, PhD, Aston University (UK)*
- *Manuel Valcarce, BSc, VALGO (Spain)*
- *Marta Fernandes, BSc, Go Fit (Portugal)*
- *Rita Santos Rocha, PhD, ESDRM Sport Sciences School of Rio Maior-IPSantarém, EuropeActive (Portugal) – TEG leader*
- *Sasha Linz, BSc, Fitness First (Germany)*
- *Simona Pajaujiene, PhD, Active Training / Lithuanian Sports University / EuropeActive (Lithuania) – TEG leader*
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External Consultation Group (2018):

- *Anna Szumilewicz, PhD, Gdansk University of Physical Education and Sport (Poland)*
- *Ben Jackson, Active IQ (United Kingdom)*
- *Ben Pratt, Keilir Academy (Iceland)*
- *Christoffer Andersen, PhD, MSc, Metropolitan University College (Denmark)*
- *Graham Melstrand, American Council on Exercise (USA)*
- *Maria Pedersen, At Work A/S (Denmark)*
- *Mikael Witick, Trainer4You (Finland)*
- *Per Bergqvist, Bergqvist Massage & Friskvårdsutbildningar (Sweden)*
- *Susana Franco, PhD, ESDRM Sport Sciences School of Rio Maior-IPSantarém (Portugal)*
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Technical expert group (2020 Review)

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- *Atle Arntzen, Personal Trainer Manager, Norway*
- *Anna Bogdanova, Personal Trainer, PSC Deputy Director - EREPS, EuropeActive, Denmark*
- *Dr. Michael Harrison, PSC Deputy Director - Accreditation, EuropeActive, Belgium; Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland*
- *Colin Huffen, Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity, SportPark Loughborough University, United Kingdom*
- *David Kingsbury, Personal Trainer, United Kingdom*

- *Prof. Simona Pajaujiene, PhD, Lithuanian Association of Health and Fitness Clubs (LSKA), Lithuanian Sports University, Lithuania*
- *Ben Pratt, Nordic Fitness Education, Iceland*
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Technical expert group (2023 Review of essential skills)

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- *Ben Pratt, Nordic Fitness Education, Iceland*
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- *Sarah Durnford, Instructor Experience Development Director, Les Mills UK (UK)*
- *Espen Arntzen, Founder and CEO of the Academy of Personal Training and Wellness Health and Technology (Norway)*
- *Marie-Veronique Bernard, Head of Human Resources, Basic Fit*

Essential skills of a Personal Trainer

Sector indicator	Skill (this professional is able to:)	Explanation
Service delivery	On board new users	Provide an essential new users fitness onboarding process to ensure understanding of fitness club rules/policies. Provide all users with a fitness club induction in the safe and effective use of fitness equipment.
	Facilitate user motives and training goals	Facilitate individual motives and the development of clear and concise short, medium- and long-term fitness goals.
	Collect detailed user information	Collect detailed user information including: goals, previous exercise habits, health status and history, lifestyle, time availability, exercise barriers, motivation and readiness for lifestyle change.
	Perform health screening and fitness assessments	Carry out appropriately selected health screening to stratify the user's health risk in relation to exercise and perform functional and physical fitness assessments to measure users' fitness level and, analyse and interpret the gathered information.
	Design exercise programmes following currently accepted exercise guidelines	Develop a range of exercise programs, that are well matched to the abilities, needs and preferences of the user and their goals in the short, medium, and long-term.
	Plan and prepare an individual exercise session	Plan an exercise session suitable for the needs of the users, including the structure of the session, training variables and necessary equipment, contributing to the objectives of long-term exercise programme.
	Conduct exercise sessions and provide safe instruction	Conduct safe and effective exercise sessions, providing instruction on exercise performance that follows correct and accepted exercise technique guidelines, as part of an ongoing long-term exercise programme.
	Adapt exercise	Apply relevant exercise adaptations or options to facilitate needs, capabilities and exercise progression as well as, improvements in ongoing individual user health status.
	Provide and gain user's feedback, monitor, evaluate and modify exercise programmes	Using users' feedback and appropriate assessment tools to monitor and evaluate, and where necessary, modify individual sessions and overall exercise programme.

Meeting health and safety requirements	Ensure user's safety	Observe users at all times and inform them where necessary about health and safety requirements and emergency procedures and be able to deal with unforeseen accidents and emergencies.
	Observe and correct users' exercise performance	Observe users and offer appropriate corrections to ensure equipment set up, exercise techniques and related procedures are safe and effective.
Communication, motivation and user service	Communicate with the users regarding their training.	Develop rapport and effective communication (i.e. constructive and positive feedback) in order to support individuals to begin, adhere and /or return to exercise programmes.
	Motivate the users to maintain their commitment to the exercise programme	Use motivational tools during and between sessions to maintain user commitment and accountability to the exercise programme in the long-term and, to support the behavioural change process. Identify psychological barriers to physical activity.
	Provide information on fitness training programmes	Provide clients with information on the characteristics and benefits of participation in given fitness training programmes.
	Promote a healthy lifestyle	Provide specific information about a healthy lifestyle (including nutrition, stress management and sleep) and the benefits of physical activity for health.
	Promote user referral	Encourage and invite users to bring friends, family and others to fitness activities.
Equipment and tools (including digital technology)	Select equipment for a fitness session	Use equipment to conduct a fitness session, ensuring the efficiency, safety and attractiveness of different exercises and, compliance with industry and national and international guidelines for normal operating procedures.
	Use digital technology	Use appropriate digital technology (e.g. mobile apps, wearables, online software) and artificial intelligence to better individualize the exercise programme, track general activity levels, increase accountability, provide beneficial information, and enhance exercise participation and adherence.
Environment	Select and maintain a safe exercise environment	Assess risks to select and ensure the provision of a safe and clean exercise environment, whether delivering live or online, indoor or outdoor.
	Promote principles of sustainability	Identify the factors effecting the environmental impact of their role and how to improve that impact. Promote and implement sustainable practices.
Professional Technical Capacity	Demonstrate correct exercise technique	Display perfect exercise technique at all times (posture, range of motion, control, timing and form), especially for exercises performed with fitness equipment.

Professional Attitude	Demonstrate professional conduct	Work within the parameters given at EQF level 4, recognising the standards and professional limitations that this provides. Ensure essential personal skills and knowledge to be a Personal Trainer are maintained and updated in line with industry recognised ethical codes of practice. Be a positive role model at all times and keep up to date with industry developments.
	Cooperate with other professionals	Cooperate with other professionals to safely and effectively deliver an exercise program focused on the user's long-term goals.
	Comply with applicable legal regulations	Comply with applicable legal regulations regarding the professional tasks of a Personal Trainer.
	Personal data management	Ensure confidentiality and management of data in compliance with national legislation, including data protection requirements.
	Demonstrate professional responsibility	Ensure that users and other workers are treated with respect and that appropriate public liability insurance is in place at all times of instructing.
	Reflect upon own performance	Reflect upon professional task performance against best practice guidelines.
	Promote equity, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace	Ensure and respect an inclusive and equitable environment.
	Promote anti-doping in a fitness and physical activity environment	Uphold fitness facilities policies in relation to anti-doping.
Business, Marketing and Sales Skills	Apply business, marketing and sales skills	Apply business, marketing and sales strategies and tools to achieve success as an employee, independent contractor or entrepreneur.



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