

SETTING THE STANDARDS FOR THE EUROPEAN HEALTH AND FITNESS SECTOR

'Healthy Lifestyle Promoter' Lifelong Learning Qualification



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I. Executive Summary

This document refers the EuropeActive Sector Qualification Framework in Active Leisure. It is a description of learning outcomes, required to promote healthy lifestyles in the European community.

The proportion of physically inactive citizens in the EU remains unacceptably high. 46% of EU citizens do not exercise or play sport at all (1). This might indicate that the message about the importance of physical activity (2) for an individual's health and wellbeing has still not got through to significant segments of the EU population. Many Europeans eat unhealthily and suffer chronically from stress. In the past 50 to 70 years, generations of us were not aware of the healthy living guidelines (3), that research is giving us now. It's time for a knowledge update, not only for the consumer, but also for professionals who work with consumers in the areas of healthcare, physical activity and lifestyle.

To work toward a solution, more attention should be put into spreading the knowledge and understanding of what a healthier life is: for youth, adults and seniors, and also for people with special health-related conditions. Therefore, it is necessary to implement an appropriate qualification for healthy lifestyle promotion.

The 'Healthy Lifestyle Promoter' qualification has been developed as part of the Erasmus plus project 'New Health Programme'. It aims to provide sports- and lifestyle organisations, professionals, volunteers and consumers with easily accessible and understandable knowledge and tools. These would include a newly developed 'Lifestyle Scan'¹, to promote physical activity, healthy eating, mental fitness and a healthy lifestyle. Thanks to this project, Healthy Lifestyle Promoters can use e-learning 'New Health Educational Materials'² and a free consumer healthy lifestyle platform, based on international guidelines for healthy living. In this way, the recommendations on a healthy mindset, exercise and eating will be known and applied in neighborhoods throughout Europe.

This qualification is purpose and outcome driven and is aligned with the health and fitness industry's main goal to get: **'More People, More Active, More Often'**.

¹ 'Lifestyle Scan' - a scan with which the most important lifestyle and health influences in the field of exercise, nutrition and mental health are mapped and given a weighting: unhealthy, neutral, healthy.

² 'New Health Educational Materials' - lifestyle and health educational material in the field of healthy exercise, healthy nutrition and mental well-being, developed within the New Health 2022 project, supported by the European Commission.

II. Technical Expert Group Members & External Consultation Experts

A relevant group of technical experts from across Europe and representing the different stakeholders of our sector, took part in the development of The Healthy Lifestyle Promoter lifelong learning qualification. This document was fully adopted within the process of external consultation and afterwards approved by the EuropeActive Professional Standards Committee (PSC).

Technical Expert Group:

- Prof. Anna Szumilewicz, PhD, PSC Deputy Director – Standards, EuropeActive, Brussels, Belgium; GPUES - Gdansk University of Physical Education and Sport, Poland (TEG Leader)
- John van Heel, New Health Foundation, The Netherlands
- Julian Berriman, PSC Director, EuropeActive, Belgium
- Prof. Susanna Franco, PhD, The Sport Sciences School of Rio Maior (ESDRM)
- Prof. Simona Pajaujiene, PhD, Lithuanian Association of Health and Fitness Clubs (LSKA), Lithuanian Sports University, Lithuania
- Javier Fuster, VALGO, Spain
- Gert Van Reckem, Coördinator Health & Ethics, De Fitness Organisatie, Belgium

Internal consultation experts, involved in the New Health Project:

- Prof. Branislav Antala, Chair of Department, Comenius University, Slovakia
- Manel Valcarse, President of the AEDESA Association, Spain
- Harald Tschan, European Network of Sport Education (ENSE), Austria
- Jan Middelkamp, Development Director at HDD and CEO of BlackBoxPublishers
- Dirk Schaars, Knowledge Center for Sport Netherlands (KCSportNL)
- Bora Avric, Movisie, The Netherlands
- Ronald Wouters, NL Actief, The Netherlands

External consultation experts – to be listed when the consultation process is completed:

III. Description of the qualification

Type of qualification

Lifelong Learning (LLL) Qualification

Name of the qualification

'Healthy Lifestyle Promoter'

EQF level

EQF level 2

Job Purpose

To support communities and individuals in leading a healthy lifestyle through promotional and informational activities (e.g. in the field of health-enhancing exercise and diet, sleep and mental habits and behaviour change), using available tools and educational materials.

Short description of learning outcomes

The Healthy Lifestyle Promoter has the knowledge to support communities and individuals to make positive lifestyle changes. They can discuss ways to encourage communities and individuals to use initial lifestyle screening tools (such as Lifestyle Scan) and health educational materials. They can also describe how to provide an individual with practical information, which can be helpful for positive lifestyle change. The Healthy Lifestyle Promoter signposts all populations, including those with special needs, to appropriate information resources, such as New Health Educational Materials (e.g. on health-enhancing exercise and diet, sleeping and mental habits).

Responsibility and autonomy

The Healthy Lifestyle Promoter can describe his/her professional boundaries and knows how to perform his/her health promotion activities independently, often within a network of community-based health and lifestyle provision. He/she is ready to inform communities and individuals about healthy lifestyle recommendations, but is not responsible for the effects of health-related activities undertaken by the individuals.

Specific Prerequisites

You must be at least 16 years old to obtain this qualification. There are no requirements in terms of prior education or professional experience.

Target groups

The following occupational groups may potentially be interested in obtaining the Healthy Lifestyle Promoter qualification: exercise and sports professionals, healthcare professionals, public health specialists, lifestyle coaches, physiotherapists, teachers, pedagogical or community workers. With this qualification they will have additional, practical knowledge to promote healthy lifestyles among their communities and individuals.

The Healthy Lifestyle Promoter qualification is also aimed at volunteers and consumers who want to spread information on healthy habits but are from outside the above occupational groups. This qualification could be attractive for youngsters, as well, opening the opportunity for professional development in the health and fitness sector.

Achieved competences:

The 'Healthy Lifestyle Promoter' has the competences to:

- Discuss ways how to encourage communities and individuals to use initial lifestyle screening tools, such as the Lifestyle Scan;
- Describe ways to provide the individual with practical information on healthy lifestyle (e.g. related to exercise, diet, sleep, mental habits, avoiding alcohol, tobacco or drugs), using health promotion materials such as New Health Educational Materials;
- Signpost to resources, organisations, events in the local community that support a healthy lifestyle for all populations, including those with special needs;
- Discuss the importance of being a good role model through his/her own attitude and behaviour;
- Discuss the importance of performing health promotion activities within his/her scope of practice.

The 'Healthy Lifestyle Promoter' is not endorsed to:

- Deliver group exercise, fitness instruction or personal training sessions;
- Prescribe rehabilitation programmes;
- Provide exercise testing and prescription;
- Prescribe any kind of medication or supplements;
- Prescribe nutritional programmes;
- Diagnose any psychological disorders or mental health conditions;
- Provide any kind of psychological counselling;
- Diagnose diseases, disabilities or other clinical conditions.

Learning Outcomes Units

The 'Healthy Lifestyle Promoter' LLL Qualification include the following units of learning outcomes:

1. Organisational, legal and ethical issues related to working as a Healthy Lifestyle Promoter;
2. Lifestyle and health;
3. Exercise as medicine;
4. Healthy eating as medicine;
5. Health mindset as medicine;
6. Tools used to assess the individual's lifestyle;
7. Sources of information on healthy lifestyle;
8. Communication with the individuals.

Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes units cover following learning outcomes:

1. Organisational, legal and ethical issues related to working as a Healthy Lifestyle Promoter

The learner:

- 1.1. Describes the job purpose of the 'Healthy Lifestyle Promoter', his/her occupational roles and limitations, and the options for further professional development;
- 1.2. Describes the range of responsibility and ethical issues related to performing as a Healthy Lifestyle Promoter.

2. Lifestyle and health

The learner:

- 2.1. Describes the main components of a healthy lifestyle (including physical activity, healthy eating, proper sleeping habits, stress management and mental well-being, avoidance of bad habits like addictions to tobacco, alcohol or drugs, or excessive exercise);
- 2.2. Describes the main benefits of a healthy lifestyle;
- 2.3. Describes how the human body works and common health conditions;
- 2.4. Lists the most common motives and barriers to living a healthy lifestyle;
- 2.5. Describes ways to encourage people to make healthy lifestyle and behaviour changes.

3. Exercise as medicine

The learner:

- 3.1. Discusses general recommendations for exercise;
- 3.2. Lists the main benefits of regular exercise (including those relating to strength and endurance, flexibility, neuromotor ability, posture and stability, relaxation and breathing control);
- 3.3. Lists the diseases for which regular exercise is a preventive measure;
- 3.4. Lists warning signs during exercise indicating the need to consult a doctor or other specialist;
- 3.5. Describes Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PAR-Q) or other questionnaires to initially screen the individual's readiness to exercise;
- 3.6. Discusses the importance of knowledge about physical activity.

4. Healthy eating as medicine

The learner:

- 4.1. Discusses general recommendations for healthy eating and weight management;
- 4.2. Describes the role and common dietary sources of particular nutrients (including carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals, trace elements) and the importance of proper hydration;
- 4.3. Lists the diseases for which healthy eating is a preventive measure;
- 4.4. Discusses the importance of knowledge about healthy eating.

5. Health mindset as medicine

The learner:

- 5.1. Describes the impact of an individual's thoughts on health status;
- 5.2. Describes the term 'health mindset'³;
- 5.3. Describes tools used in stress relief (including sport activities, relaxation techniques, breathing exercises, mindfulness, meditation, positive mindset, invoking positive emotions such as love, gratitude, pleasure).
- 5.4. Describes the process of behaviour change (e.g. according to the Prochaska and DiClemente's stages of change model);

³ Health mindset - Health Mindset literally means "health beliefs". It is the way we think about ourselves and in particular about our lifestyle, health and associated skills and qualities.



- 5.5. Describes tools supporting behaviour change (including proper goal setting , self-monitoring, rewards, supporting self-efficacy, mind(re)set⁴, affirmation, visualisation);
- 5.6. Discusses the importance of showing empathy with the individual and genuine support in changing behaviour;
- 5.7. Discusses the importance of knowledge about brain functioning for behaviour change.

6. Tools used to assess the individual's lifestyle

The learner:

- 6.1. Describes examples of lifestyle assessment tools, such as The Lifestyle Scan, and the principles of their application in practice;
- 6.2. Explains the benefits of using lifestyle assessment tools.

7. Sources of information on healthy lifestyle

The learner:

- 7.1. Lists global and national bodies and organisations promoting a healthy lifestyle;
- 7.2. Describes the guidelines of the above bodies and organisations, on the components of healthy lifestyle (including exercise, diet, sleep or mental habits);
- 7.3. Describes the New Health Educational Materials, their benefits and the principles of their practical use;
- 7.4. Discusses other sources of information on healthy lifestyles (e.g. websites, books, events) and provides criteria for assessing their credibility.

8. Communication with the individual

The learner:

- 8.1. Describes basic principles of customer service (including proper welcoming, service-oriented behaviour, active listening, own presentation and body language);
- 8.2. Describes the rules regarding treating the individual's information according to the General Data Protection Regulation.

⁴ Mind(re)set - The cause of a lack of health skills often lies in a negative health mindset. Insufficient knowledge and skills to continue to make healthy choices. Mind(re)set is developing the knowledge about healthy living and reducing the limiting beliefs that hinder a healthy life.

IV. Recommended methods of learning outcomes assessment

To obtain 'Healthy Lifestyle Promoter' qualification, the learner must confirm the achievement of all learning outcomes defined in this document. As all learning outcomes are theoretical, we recommend the following assessment methods: various forms of theoretical tests, including descriptive tasks and multiple choice questions. The training providers do not have to limit themselves to these methods. Verification of learning outcomes can be carried out in direct contact with the assessor or on-line.

References

1. Special Eurobarometer 472 report: European Commission, Wave EB88.4 – TNS opinion & social. https://ec.europa.eu/search/?queryText=Special+Eurobarometer+472+report&query_source=europa_default&filterSource=europa_default&swlang=nl&more_options_language=nl&more_options_formats=&more_options_date=
2. <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/disease-prevention>
3. Health literacy: <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/disease-prevention/health-literacy>