



Occupational Standards  
**DISABILITY INSTRUCTOR**



## Contents

### The outcomes of these standards are:

- Unit 1 (E2) Professional roles and responsibilities when working with disabled participants
- Unit 2 (E2) The key considerations affecting working with clients with disabilities
- Unit 3 (E2) Support health and well-being for clients with disabilities
- Unit 4 (E2) Collect and analyse information about clients with disabilities
- Unit 5 (E2) Plan exercise for clients with disabilities
- Unit 6 (E2) Instruct exercise session for clients with disabilities
- Unit 7 (E2) Evaluate and review exercise for clients with disabilities



# Unit 1 (E2) Professional roles and responsibilities when working with disabled participants

This standard covers working within professional role boundaries in relation to working with the disabled and applying professional responsibilities when working with the disabled

## Performance Criteria

### Exercise professionals must be able to:

#### *Task 1: Work within professional role boundaries in relation to working with the disabled*

- P1. Explain the importance of respecting own professional role boundaries, limitations and competency when working with disabled participants
- P2. Work within the remit of the specific role being undertaken
- P3. Identify legislation, policies, guidance and ethical issues relating to the provision of exercise for disabled participants
- P4. Explain how to enable non-discriminatory treatment of people with a disability using inclusion principles
- P5. Identify sources of information and advice on working with disabled participants
- P6. Identify when and how to refer clients to their GP/relevant other professional
- P7. Identify local or national initiatives to raise awareness of the importance of exercise for disabled participants

## Performance Criteria

### Exercise professionals must be able to:

#### *Task 2: Apply professional responsibilities when working with the disabled*

- P8. Hold up-to-date first aid skills when working with disabled participants
- P9. Explain the importance of engaging in regular Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in the area of disabled participants within specialist areas
- P10. Identify where to source specific information to enhance practice or engage in further education/development.
- P11. Explain how to ensure insurance policies cover their instruction of disabled participants
- P12. Demonstrate their responsibilities and limitations when working with disabled participants
- P13. Follow equality and diversity legislation and policies
- P14. Ensure disabled participants feel comfortable in a gym or group exercise environment

## Knowledge and Understanding

### Exercise professionals must know and understand:

#### *Task 1: Professional role boundaries in relation to working with the disabled*

- K1. The importance of understanding and respecting own professional role boundaries, limitations and competency when working with disabled participants
- K2. The importance of working within the remit of the specific role being undertaken
- K3. Legislation, human rights, policies, guidance and ethical issues relating to the provision of exercise for disabled participants including:
  - » Informed consent
  - » GP/medical clearance
  - » Relevant instructor qualification
- K4. How to enable non-discriminatory treatment of people with a disability using inclusion principles
- K5. Know when and how to refer clients to their GP/relevant other professional
- K6. Identify sources of information and advice on working with disabled participants
- K7. Identify local or national initiatives to raise awareness of the importance of exercise for disabled participants

## Performance Criteria

### Exercise professionals must be able to:

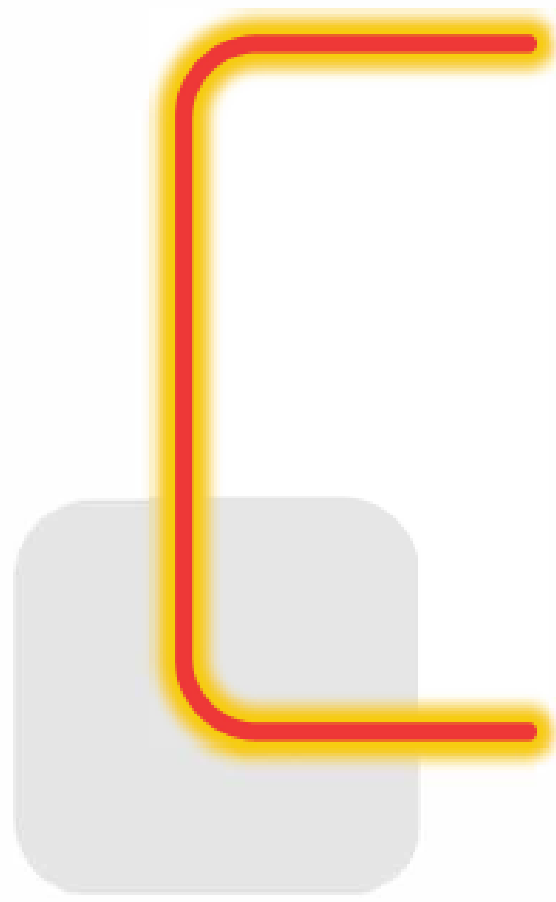
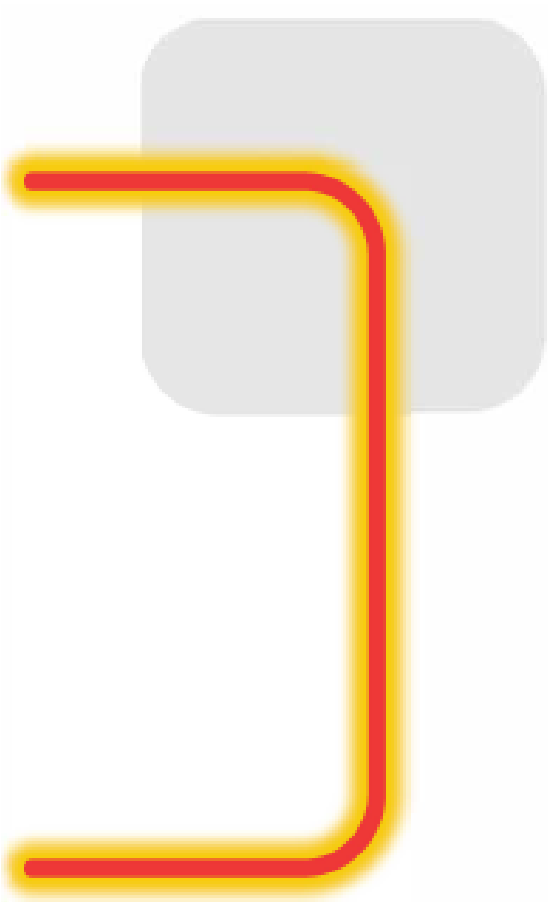
#### *Task 2: Professional responsibilities when working with the disabled*

- K8. The importance for instructors to ensure they hold up-to-date first aid skills when working with disabled participants
- K9. The importance of engaging in regular CPD in the area of disabled participants within specialist areas
- K10. Source specific information to enhance practice or engage in further education/development
- K11. How to ensure insurance policies cover their instruction of disabled participants
- K12. The responsibilities and limitations of a disability exercise instructor
  - » acting as a role model
  - » adhering to the policies and procedures
  - » adhering to the code of practice
  - » always wearing uniform and/or name badge if one is provided
  - » understanding and acting upon their responsibilities

- » recognising the need to protect the rights of participation, for fun, enjoyment and achievement for all working in an open environment
- » ensure appropriate conduct at all times to include:
  - maintaining client's dignity
  - use physical contact/touch appropriately
  - using appropriate language
  - being educational, empowering and motivating

K13. The importance of following relevant equality and diversity legislation and policies

K14. Common reasons why disabled participants may feel uncomfortable in a gym or group exercise environment



## Unit 2 (E2) The Key considerations affecting working with clients with disabilities

This standard covers the models of disability and the key considerations

### Performance Criteria

Exercise professionals must be able to:

#### Task 1: The models of disability

- P1. Identify the models of disability
- P2. Identify the possible range of clients with disabilities

### Performance Criteria

Exercise professionals must be able to:

#### Task 2: The key considerations

- P3. Identify the principles and practice of:
  - » inclusion
  - » access and equity
  - » confidentiality
  - » empowerment/disempowerment in relation to people with a disability
- P4. Explain strategies that support people with disabilities to exercise their rights and independence
- P5. Identify the types of impairments which clients with disabilities may have
- P6. Identify the implications that having a disabling condition may have on the client's physical fitness and capacity
- P7. Identify the physiology of specific disabilities and associated risk factors in relation to exercise to enable safe and effective exercise outcomes
- P8. Explain the importance of listening skills and addressing client's feedback
- P9. Identify the causes and consequences of disabilities in the context of their effect on exercise capacity
- P10. Identify the role of physical activity in managing disability and enhancing health
- P11. Explain how to develop effective marketing strategies, images, messages and events calendar
- P12. Explain how to deliver good customer service recognising that there is an increased level of responsibility for clients with disabilities

### Knowledge and Understanding

Exercise professionals must know and understand:

#### Task 1: The models of disability

- K1. The models of disability
  - » Medical model
  - » Social model

- K2. The social model of disability, that disabled people are seen as being disabled not by their impairments (such as blindness or autism) but by society's failure to take their needs into account. Being disabled is part of the normal spectrum of human life. For example, if a wheelchair user can't get into a building, the social model would state that the problem is that there is no ramp, not that the person is using a wheelchair
- K3. The possible range of clients with disabilities, including those with:
  - » a physical disability
  - » a learning disability
  - » a hearing impairment
  - » a visual impairment
  - » a communicative disability
  - » a behavioral disability

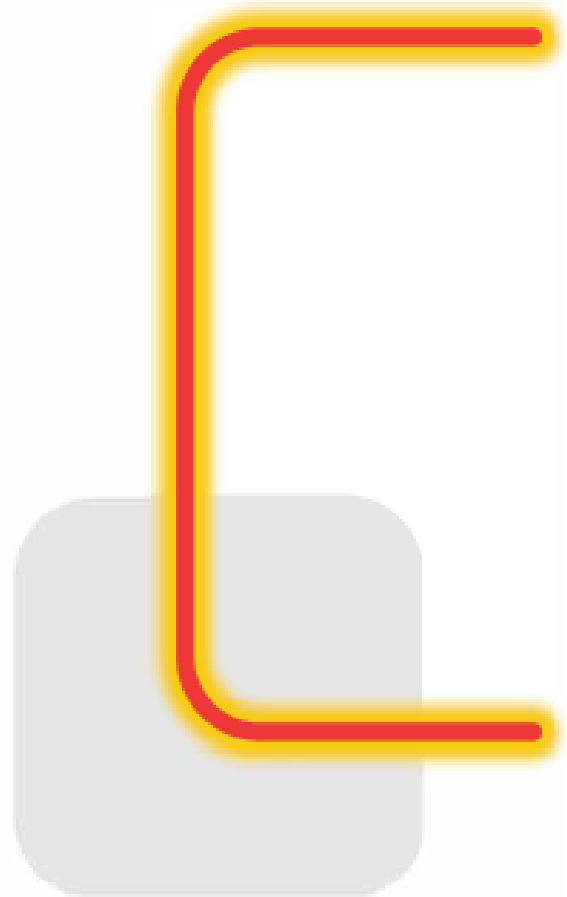
### Knowledge and Understanding

Exercise professionals must know and understand:

#### Task 2: The key considerations

- K4. Principles and practice of:
  - » inclusion
  - » access and equity
  - » confidentiality
  - » empowerment/disempowerment in relation to people with a disability
- K5. Strategies that support people with disabilities to exercise their rights and independence
- K6. The types of impairments which clients with disabilities may have and the implications of these on participation in a physical activity programme
- K7. The implications that having a disabling condition may have on:
  - » cardiovascular capacity
  - » muscular strength
  - » muscular endurance
  - » flexibility and mobility
  - » co-ordination/balance/motor skills
  - » functional capacity
- K8. Physiology of specific disabilities and associated risk factors in relation to exercise to enable safe and effective exercise outcomes
- K9. The importance of listening skills and addressing client's feedback

- K10. Causes and consequences of disabilities in the context of their effect on exercise capacity
- K11. The role of physical activity in managing disability and enhancing health
- K12. How to develop effective marketing strategies, images, messages and events calendar
- K13. How to deliver good customer service recognising that there is an increased level of responsibility for clients with disabilities



## Unit 3 (E2) Support health and well-being for clients with disabilities

This standard covers barriers to participation for people with disabilities. Provide information on healthy eating and hydration guidelines and managing health and safety.

### Performance Criteria

#### Exercise professionals must be able to:

##### *Task 1: Barriers to participation for people with disabilities*

- P1. Explain the psychological, socio-cultural and economic aspects of disability
- P2. Identify the social, political, cultural and historical issues that affect access to participation for people with a disability
- P3. Identify the barriers that clients with disabilities may have to physical activity and how to take account of these
- P4. Identify considerations when establishing and developing an effective working relationship with clients with disabilities

### Performance Criteria

#### Exercise professionals must be able to:

##### *Task 2: Provide information on healthy eating and hydration guidelines*

- P5. Provide clients with information on proper nutrition, hydration and fluid replacement, particularly when participating in physical activity
- P6. Explain the significance of healthy eating for clients with disabilities

### Performance Criteria

#### Exercise professionals must be able to:

##### *Task 3: Manage health and safety*

- P7. Identify the standard operating procedures for safe use of facilities by clients with disabilities, their carers and personal assistants and assistance animals
- P8. Use, care and maintain facility's equipment to maintain safety of clients
- P9. Identify the national and local requirements and procedures for the working environment involving clients with disabilities
- P10. Identify ways and methods for dealing with emergencies according to internationally recognised procedures including providing first aid
- P11. Explain the importance of extending the standard appropriate response to emergency situations

### Knowledge and Understanding

#### Exercise professionals must know and understand:

##### *Task 1: Barriers to participation for people with disabilities*

- K1. Psychological, socio-cultural and economic aspects of disability

K2. Social, political, cultural and historical issues that affect access to participation for people with a disability

K3. The barriers that clients with disabilities may have to physical activity and how to take account of these to include:

- » attitudes
- » beliefs
- » anxieties
- » myths
- » opinions formed by past experiences
- » cultural restrictions

K4. Considerations when establishing and developing an effective working relationship with clients with disabilities

K5. The systematic approaches to motivational, environmental and other factors that may assist clients with disabilities to adhere to physical activity

### Knowledge and Understanding

#### Exercise professionals must know and understand:

##### *Task 2: Provide information on healthy eating and hydration guidelines*

K6. The importance of proper nutrition, hydration and fluid replacement, particularly when participating in physical activity

K7. The significance of healthy eating for clients with disabilities

### Knowledge and Understanding

#### Exercise professionals must know and understand:

##### *Task 3: Manage health and safety*

- » cardiovascular capacity
- » muscular strength
- » muscular endurance
- » flexibility and mobility
- » co-ordination/balance/motor skills
- » functional capacity

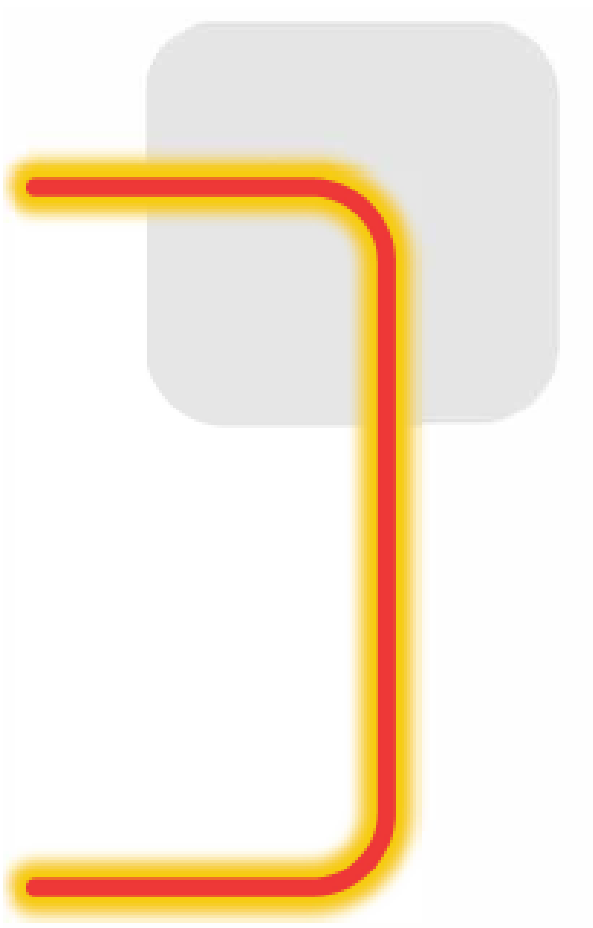
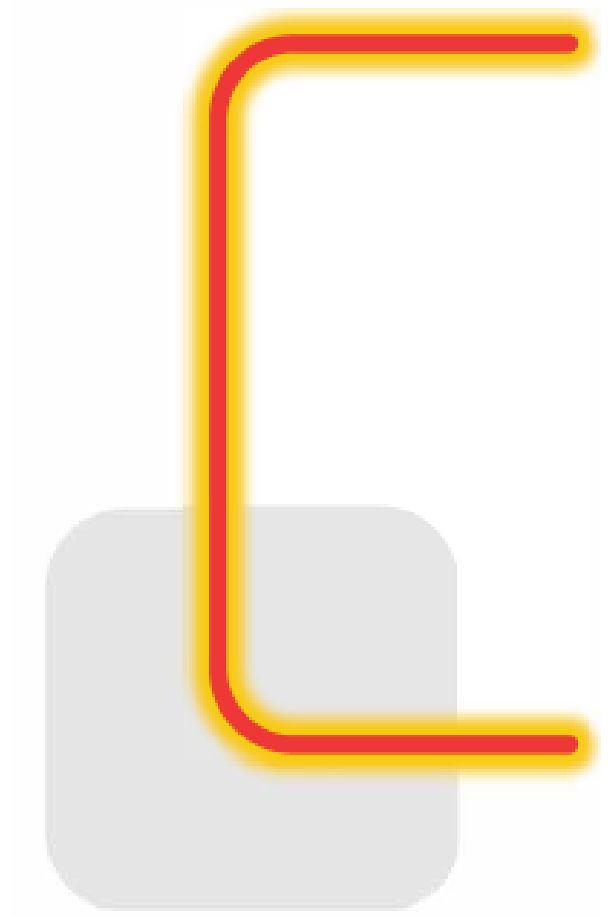
K8. Standard operating procedures for safe use of facilities by clients with disabilities, their carers and personal assistants and assistance animals

K9. The importance of care and maintenance of facility equipment to maintain safety of clients

K10. The national and local requirements and procedures for the working environment involving clients with disabilities to include:

- » completing risk assessments
- » identifying risk and procedures to reduce them

- K11. Ways and methods for dealing with emergencies according to internationally recognised procedures including providing first aid
- K12. The importance of extending the standard appropriate response to emergency situations for example:
- » accompany home
  - » telephone follow up and support
  - » establishment of a specific emergency action plan





## Unit 4 (E2) Collect and analyse information about clients with disabilities

This standard covers collecting relevant information and screening

### Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

#### Task 1: Collect relevant information

- P1. Collect all relevant information from the client
- P2. Use suitable adapted pre-screening paperwork for clients with disabilities
- P3. Gain informed consent from client prior to participating in the physical activity sessions
- P4. Follow the legal and organisational procedures of screening and collecting client information

### Performance Criteria

**Exercise professionals must be able to:**

#### Task 2: Screening

- P5. Use a range of suitable screening tools for clients with disabilities
- P6. Use suitable methods for assessing clients with disabilities readiness to participate
- P7. Know how and when to recommend referral to appropriate medical or health professionals

### Knowledge and Understanding

**Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

#### Task 1: Collect relevant information

- K1. General information which can be collected from clients with disabilities including:
  - » informed consent/PAR-Q
  - » lifestyle factors
  - » medical history and medication
  - » exercise history
  - » physical activity history
  - » attitude and motivation
  - » exercise preferences
  - » barriers to exercise (perceived or actual)
  - » current level of fitness
  - » health status and any contraindications
  - » injury status and any specific recommended adaptations, if appropriate
  - » personal goals
- K2. Information which can be collected from clients with disabilities including:
  - » range of movement and functional skills
  - » current level of functional ability
  - » requirements for access
  - » available support and personal requirements
  - » preferred communication methods
  - » safety requirements
  - » medical requirements

- » equipment requirements
  - » barriers and facilitators to participation
- K3. The exercise goals of clients with disabilities including:
    - » physical
    - » psychological
    - » lifestyle
    - » social
    - » adherence

- K4. The purpose of collecting information on participant's expectations and motivation, level of previous exercise participation and current level of ability

- K5. Suitable methods of collecting client information, could include:
  - » physical activity readiness questionnaire (PAR-Q)
  - » consultation with the client
  - » consultation with carers/personal assistants (where appropriate)
  - » consulting with other professionals
  - » interview
  - » questionnaire
  - » adapted fitness tests
  - » functional assessments
  - » observation
  - » feedback

- K6. Purpose of the adapted pre-screening paperwork for clients with disabilities

- K7. Legal and organisational procedures for gaining consent from clients prior to participating in the physical activity sessions

- K8. The legal and ethical implications and responsibilities of screening and of collecting client information, to include:
  - » data protection
  - » storage of documentation
  - » confidentiality of client information
  - » instructor's duty of care to respond appropriately to client's information

### Knowledge and Understanding

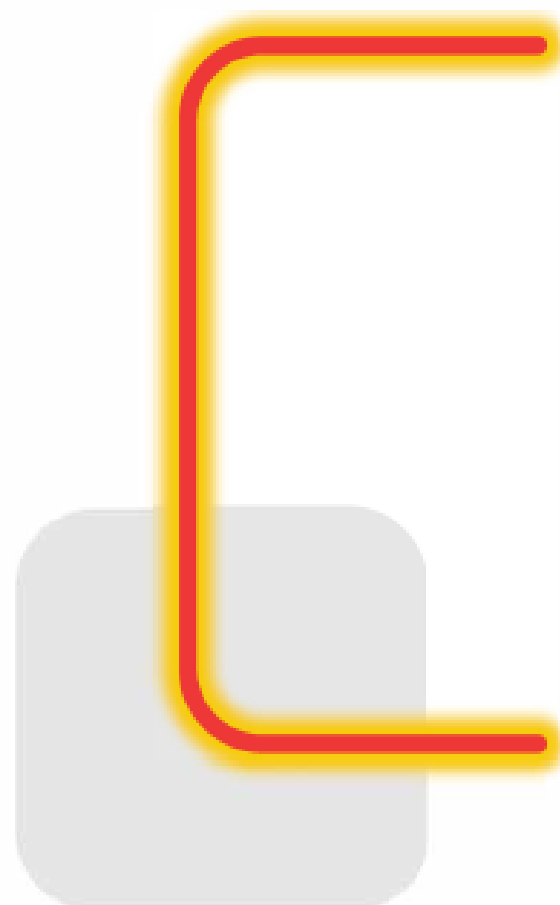
**Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

#### Task 2: Screening

- K9. How to use pre-participation assessments to risk stratify (i.e. asymptomatic or low risk etc.)

and manage the risks associated with any conditions and limitations during physical activity

- K10. Identify a range of suitable screening tools and assessments for clients with disabilities could include assessing the following:
- » grip strength
  - » flexibility
  - » range of movement
  - » balance
  - » BMI
  - » peak flow
  - » fitness and ability levels
  - » posture
  - » movement control
  - » skeletal alignment
  - » previous injury
  - » exercise history
  - » form
- K11. The importance of recommending referral to appropriate medical or health professionals where necessary
- K12. Awareness of the following injury risks or considerations that may be related to clients with disabilities:
- » inadequate skill and physical preparation
  - » overtraining
  - » biomechanics and exercise technique
  - » physical and mental preparation
  - » poor core and postural awareness
  - » fatigue and recovery
  - » history of falls
- K13. The conditions that may present in clients with disabilities that may require referral to a relevant medical or appropriate allied health professional:
- K14. The role of medical or health professionals for referral purposes
- K15. Methods for client reassessment and programme evaluation



## Unit 5 (E2) An exercise for clients with disabilities

This standard covers planning how to manage risks in exercise sessions for the disabled and plan suitable sessions for the disabled.

### Performance Criteria

#### Exercise professionals must be able to:

##### *Task 1: Plan how to manage risks in exercise sessions for the disabled*

- P1. Plan movements for safety and effectiveness
- P2. Identify ways of reducing the risks associated with unsafe exercise including minimising the risk of falls in the session
- P3. Identify a safe and friendly exercise environment
- P4. Identify an appropriate selection of equipment
- P5. Adhere to evidence-based guidelines for physical activity for previously active and previously inactive disabled participants

### Performance Criteria

#### Exercise professionals must be able to:

##### *Task 2: Plan suitable sessions for the disabled*

- P6. Plan a suitably structured session in a format of exercise for which you hold relevant competency qualifications that is suitable to the level of fitness, co-ordination and ability of participants
- P7. Include appropriate adaptations to the structure and content of sessions for clients with medical conditions associated with their disability which may be adversely affected by physical activity
- P8. Structure exercise sessions to provide opportunities for comfort breaks
- P9. Apply knowledge of physiological changes occurring in the body to the planning
- P10. Include functional (life-related) movement patterns and activities into all sessions
- P11. Identify suitable personal maximum heart rates and effective target heart rate training zones based on an individual participant's age and fitness level

### Knowledge and understanding

#### Exercise professionals must know and understand:

##### *Task 1: Plan how to manage risks in exercise sessions for the disabled*

- K1. How to plan movements for safety and effectiveness
- K2. Ways of reducing the risks associated with unsafe exercise such as:
  - » exercise intensity
  - » timing
  - » equipment
  - » technique
  - » supervision

- K3. How to minimise the risk of falls
- K4. How to identify a safe and disability friendly exercise environment to include:
  - » accessibility/transport
  - » floor surfaces
  - » hazards, trips and slips
  - » footwear
  - » lighting
  - » access to toilet facilities and drinking water
  - » temperature control
  - » comfortable refreshment facilities
- K5. How to select appropriate equipment and the importance of guidance to minimize the risk of injury caused by misuse
- K6. How to source evidence-based recommended guidelines for physical activity for previously active and previously inactive disabled participants

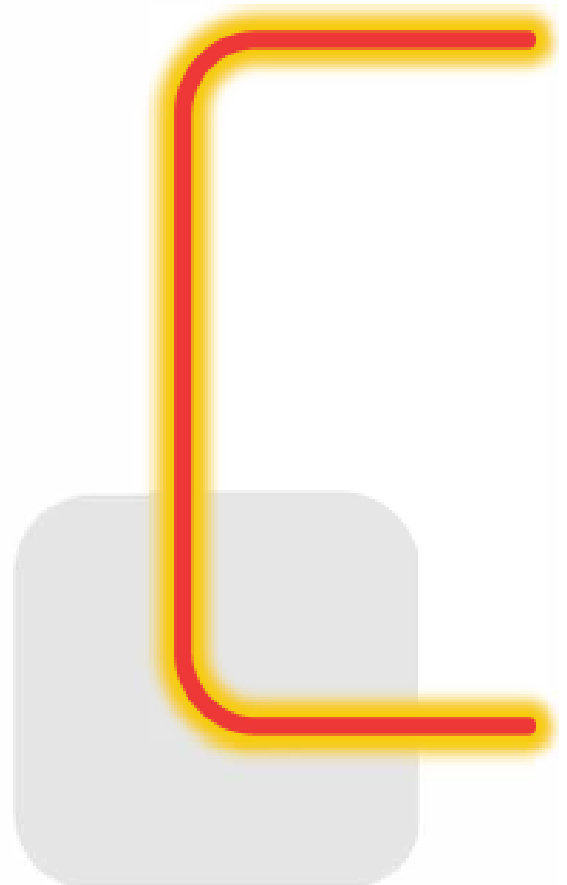
### Knowledge and understanding

#### Exercise professionals must know and understand:

##### *Task 2: Plan suitable sessions for the disabled*

- K7. How to structure a session for a client with a disability in both individual and group settings, to include:
  - » durations
  - » frequency, intensity, time, type
  - » principles of training
  - » suitable methods of overload - progression/regression
  - » functional relevance
  - » challenge
  - » suitable activities and intensities for: Warm up, Main activity, Cool down
  - » suitable exercises for cardiovascular, weight-bearing, body weight, balance, co-ordination, resistance
- K8. Why it is important to only plan a format of exercise for which you hold relevant competency qualifications such as:
  - » Exercise to music/Group exercise
  - » Gym based exercise
  - » Water based exercise
- K9. The appropriate adaptations to the structure and content of sessions required for clients disability which may be adversely affected by physical activity

- K10. The importance of considering the level of fitness, co-ordination and ability of participants in the planning process
- K11. The importance of structuring exercise sessions to provide opportunities for comfort breaks
- K12. The guidelines to consider when analysing and adapting movement to include:
- » strength/power
  - » dynamic balance
  - » aerobic
  - » flexibility training
- K13. The physiological changes occurring in the body and how they affect planning choices
- K14. Use of equipment by clients with functional limitations:
- » modular equipment
  - » small equipment (dumbbells, bands, tubes, balls, discs etc.)
- K15. The types of physical (functional) limitations associated with disability that may lead to injury and will need specific adaptation for exercise
- K16. Suitable personal maximum heart rates and effective target heart rate training zones based on an individual participant's age and fitness levels
- K17. The importance of educating participants to monitor their own exercise intensity, to include:
- » heart rate monitoring
  - » Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE)
- K18. The integration of supervised step-by-step functional (life-related) movement patterns and activities into all sessions e.g.
- » correct lifting technique
  - » getting up and down from the floor
  - » getting in and out of chairs
  - » activities for daily living



## Unit 6 (E2) Instruct exercise session for clients with

This standard covers preparing for the session. Instructing the session, meeting the needs of the older disabled adult and ending the session.

### Performance Criteria

#### Exercise professionals must be able to:

##### *Task 1: Prepare for the session*

- P1. Provide suitable preparations to respond appropriately to any medical emergency
- P2. Demonstrate ability to:
  - » ensure sufficient space
  - » assemble resources
  - » check equipment for safety and maintenance requirements
- P3. Verbally screen all participants and respond to their needs
- P4. Demonstrate communication of the type, level and demands of the session to enable participants to make informed decisions about suitability

### Performance Criteria

#### Exercise professionals must be able to:

##### *Task 2: Instruct the session, meeting the needs of the disabled adult*

- P5. Deliver a planned or pre-designed session to a group or individual with disabilities that is safe, effective and enjoyable
- P6. Provide clear instructions and use questions to confirm participants' understanding
- P7. Correctly demonstrate exercises, techniques and equipment to participants relevant to the exercise discipline i.e. gym based, group exercise, one-to-one
- P8. Monitor participation and performance to identify signs of exercise intolerance or poor technique
- P9. Regress or adapt exercises to enable participants to achieve correct posture and body alignment, range of motion, control, timing and form for all exercises in a session
- P10. Use suitable teaching skills for participants
- P11. Modify session as required considering basic mechanics, equipment, safety and fitness outcomes
- P12. Respond to participants experiencing difficulties and answer questions as required
- P13. Providing a range of intensity and impact options
- P14. Select equipment according to a participant's needs and abilities
- P15. Manage risks as they arise in the session
- P16. Recognise signs that indicate that exercise should be discontinued immediately

### Performance Criteria

#### Exercise professionals must be able to:

##### *Task 3: End the session*

- P17. Giving feedback to participants regarding their performance
- P18. Using appropriate questions to gain relevant information from participants
- P19. Put equipment away and assess safety for future use
- P20. Leaving environment in safe condition for future use
- P21. Inform or agree with participants the time, location and content of future sessions
- P22. Ensuring participants leave the exercise environment safely

### Knowledge and understanding

#### Exercise professionals must know and understand:

##### *Task 1: Prepare for the session*

- K1. The importance of making suitable preparations to respond appropriately to any medical emergency, and what kind of medical emergency may arise
- K2. How to:
  - » ensure sufficient space
  - » assemble resources
  - » check equipment for safety and maintenance requirements
- K3. How to verbally screen all participants and respond to their needs

### Knowledge and understanding

#### Exercise professionals must know and understand:

##### *Task 2: Instruct the session, meeting the needs of the disabled participants*

- K4. The importance of giving clear instructions and confirming participants' understanding of the instructions
- K5. How to correctly demonstrate exercises, techniques and equipment to participants relevant to the exercise discipline i.e. gym based, group exercise, one-to-one
- K6. How to monitor and observe participation and performance and how to identify signs of exercise intolerance or poor technique

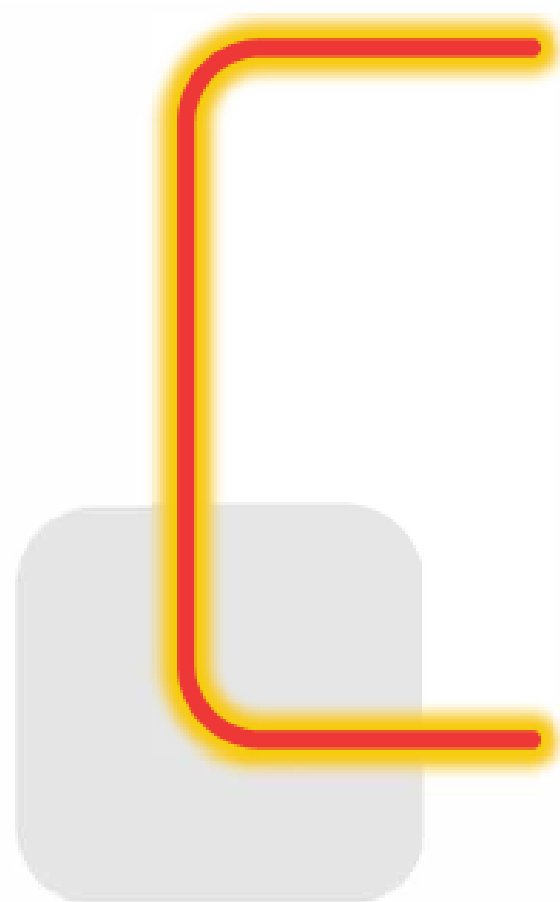
- K7. How to regress or adapt exercises to enable participants to achieve correct posture and body alignment, range of motion, control, timing and form for all fitness exercises in a session
- K8. Suitable teaching skills for participants to include use of:
  - » visual and verbal instruction
  - » cueing
  - » observation
  - » speed of instruction
  - » ensuring safe transitions
  - » movement analysis
  - » specific adaptation
  - » communication skills
  - » listening and response skills
  - » motivation
- K9. How to modify the session as required considering basic mechanics, equipment, safety and exercise outcomes
- K10. The importance of responding to participants experiencing difficulties
- K11. Why it is important to allow questions as required without it distracting or impacting the session
- K12. How to provide a range of intensity and impact options
- K13. How to select equipment according to a participant's needs and abilities
- K14. How to manage risks as they arise in the session and how to address them to prevent injury to clients
- K15. How to develop a safe, effective, enjoyable and disability-friendly exercise and physical activity environments to include:
  - » use of suitable equipment
  - » suitable music
  - » suitable space
- K16. How to recognise signs that indicate that exercise should be discontinued immediately and/or medical consultation sought

### **Knowledge and understanding**

#### **Exercise professionals must know and understand:**

##### *Task 3: End the session*

- K1. The importance of giving feedback to participants regarding their performance
- K2. How to use appropriate questions to gain relevant information from participants
- K3. The importance of putting equipment away and assessing safety for future use
- K4. The importance of leaving the environment in safe condition for future use
- K5. The importance of informing or agreeing with participants and the time, location and content of future sessions
- K6. Why it is important to ensure participants leave the exercise environment safely



# Unit 7 (E2) Evaluate and review exercise for clients with disabilities

This standard covers evaluating the session.

## Performance Criteria

### Exercise professionals must be able to:

#### Task 1: Evaluate session

- P1. Monitor and evaluate exercise session at appropriate intervals throughout the session
- P2. Evaluate exercise session according to participants' feedback, professional judgement and outcomes of sessions
- P3. Gather information from participants to improve personal performance
- P4. Use opportunities to collate and use feedback from:
  - » participants
  - » managers
  - » co-ordinators
  - » colleagues
  - » other professionals
- P5. Review own performance and identify areas needing improvement

## Knowledge and understanding

### Exercise professionals must know and understand:

#### Task 1: Evaluate session

- K1. The importance of monitoring and evaluating exercise session at appropriate intervals throughout the session
- K2. How to evaluate exercise session according to participants feedback, professional judgement and outcomes of sessions
- K3. The importance of gathering information from participants to improve personal performance
- K4. Different opportunities to collate and use feedback from:
  - » participants
  - » managers
  - » co-ordinators
  - » colleagues
  - » other professionals
- K5. The benefits of reviewing own performance and identifying areas needing improvement

