



USP183 - Professional practice for exercise and fitness professionals

LO1 Know health, safety and welfare procedures in a fitness environment

Assessment criteria

- Know health, safety and welfare procedures in a fitness environment
- Know duty of care and professional role boundaries in a fitness environment
- Know how to manage emergencies in a fitness environment
- Know how to manage risks in a fitness environment
- Know the principles of safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults





Question time...

Why do you think health and safety is important in a fitness environment?



Importance of health and safety

- To protect clients and staff from harm
- To ensure provision of safe and effective services and equipment
- To ensure safe and hygienic premises
- To meet health and safety legislative requirements and industry standards/codes of ethical and professional practice
- To prevent accidents
- To minimise risks





Activity

The following slide will give you information on the legal and regulatory requirements for health and safety relevant to working in a fitness environment. Be sure to click the link to learn more!



Legal and regulatory requirements

- [HSAWA – Health and Safety at Work Act. 1974](#)
- [COSHH – Control of Substances Hazardous to Health. 2002](#)
- [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE, 1992\)](#)
- [Manual handling regulations](#)
- [RIDDOR – Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations. 1992](#)
- [Electricity at Work Regulations](#)
- [First Aid Regulations](#)
- [Equalities Act \(2010\) and disability discrimination legislation](#)
- [Employer’s liability insurance act](#)
- [DBS \(previously CRB\) checks](#)



Individuals responsible for health and safety

- **Health and safety executive** – Inspection and review of organisation's health and safety procedures and practice
- **Health and safety officer** – Overall responsibility for managing health and safety practice in the workplace
 - Maintain and review risk assessments
 - Review organisational health and safety policy
 - Update staff on health and safety policy
 - Provide staff training
- **Instructors and staff** – Responsible for designated areas
 - Equipment and facility checks, ensure service and maintenance
 - Completing and recording specific activity risk assessments
 - Maintaining safe practice during exercise provision
 - Organisational procedures and key documents



Health and safety

- **Employer's responsibilities:**
 - Provide policies and procedures
 - Provide induction and training
 - Provide protective equipment
 - Provide security procedures
 - Risk assessment
 - Insurance
- **Employee's responsibilities:**
 - Take responsibility for own health and safety
 - Follow organisation procedures



Security procedures

- Controlled and recorded reception access/departure
- CCTV coverage of public areas, entrances and exits
- Lockable storage for personal valuables
- Locked storage of maintenance and cleaning products
- Locked doors to areas with restricted public access
- Locked storage of client data records
- Opening and closing procedures
- Fire and evacuation procedures, fire alarm testing
- Panic alarms
- Pagers





Activity

Research duty of care and professional role boundaries as a fitness instructor, in relation to the special population groups below:

- Older adults (50 plus)
- Disabled
- Ante and Postnatal
- Children
- Young adults (14 to16)



Duty of care

- **With care and attention and to the best of ability and knowledge:**
 - Maintain health and safety
 - Ensure no harm or loss
 - Take appropriate precautions
 - Greater duty of care with special populations and vulnerable adults (for example, over 18 years and in need of community care services, mental or other disability, unable to care for self)



Professional role boundaries

- Screen clients and gain informed consent
- Signpost to other services, if needed, for example GP
- Ensure safety of self and others, for example appropriate exercises
- Adequate professional insurance
- Appropriate record keeping
- Work in areas of competence



Professional role boundaries

- **Level 2 fitness instructors are not qualified to:**
 - Practise or advertise as a special populations instructor
 - Instruct special population clients on one to one or group basis
 - Plan a progressive and long term special population activity programme
- **Level 2 fitness instructors are able to:**
 - Occasionally accommodate health screened and asymptomatic special populations within mainstream exercise sessions
 - Clients must be informed of instructor role boundaries and given the choice to participate
 - Instructors should obtain relevant qualifications if regularly working with special population clients on a regular basis
 - Insurance policies must cover the instruction of special populations



Routine cleaning and maintenance

- Cleaning rota and maintenance checks (frequency and sign off responsibilities) for equipment
- Cleaning substances – anti-bacterial spray, soap, disinfectant, etc. The uses of different cleaning products. Appropriate storage and use of cleaning products. Awareness of product labels (COSHH)
- Cleaning equipment – mops, buckets, paper towels, use of warning signs when cleaning
- Waste management – for both hazardous and non-hazardous waste; disposal of waste in line with environmental policy





Activity

Research some of the health and safety documents essential in a fitness environment...

A photograph of a white 'Incident Report' form from 'Workplace Health & Safety'. The form is tilted and shows several fields for personal and accident information. The fields include: Name, Address, Contact Person, Telephone, Date of Birth, Location of Accident, and Date of Accident. Below these fields, there is a section titled 'Please complete the following sentences' and a question 'What were you doing at the time of the accident?'. The form has horizontal lines for writing.

Health and safety documents

- Health and safety poster
- Organisation health and safety policy and procedures
- Risk assessment
- Accident/incident report form
- First aid book
- Screening and informed consent records and client records
- Equipment and facility maintenance and service records



Types of emergency

- **First aid**

Accidental injuries, for example, sprains, strains, bleeding

- **Medical emergencies**

Angina, heart attack, asthma attack, epilepsy

- **Accidents**

Trips, slips, falls, using equipment incorrectly, equipment dropped on foot, lifting without spotter

- **Other emergencies**

Suspected bomb, chemical spillage, theft, security issues (breaking and entering)

- **Fire**

Caused by electrical equipment or flammable products

- **Missing person**

Child, disabled person, vulnerable adult



Staff roles

- **Instructor**

Raise alarm or call for help, deal with situations within limits of own responsibility, complete incident report form

- **Duty first aider**

Treat casualties, provide first aid, log incidents

- **Receptionist**

Contact emergency services, duty manager or duty first aider as required. Meet and direct emergency services to location

- **Duty manager**

Complete incident report form. Overall responsibility for managing health and safety

- **Fire officer**

Manage evacuation and take registers



Managing emergencies

- S** - Stop the fitness activity
- I** - Inform – explain what is happening, procedures and actions
- D** - Direct to a safe environment, for example other area, first aid room, fire assembly point
- C** - Contact appropriate personnel, for example line manager, emergency services, first aider, parent or guardian, significant others





Activity

Task 1: Make a list of all the potential hazards in a fitness environment and indicate who could be at risk of harm.

OR

Task 2: Explore a fitness environment and identify all the potential hazards and indicate who could be at risk of harm.



Hazards

Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Slippery or uneven floor surfaces• Obstructed floor areas, fire• Space and overcrowding• Temperature• Obstacles, for example water bottles or weights
Equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broken• Improper technical use• Storage issues and maintenance• Inappropriate manual handling
Working practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inappropriate exercise type and intensity• Improper exercise technique, lifting and handling
Client	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health and screening issues• Medical conditions• Behaviour, for example abusive behaviour• Chewing gum• Equipment misuse• Incorrect exercise technique
Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unauthorised persons• Theft• Suspected bomb
Hygiene	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cross-infection, contact with hazardous cleaning and maintenance products



Risk assessment

Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visual inspection and appraisal of possible hazards• Verbal screening of clients• Identification of who may be harmed by specific hazards
Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Written completion of risk assessment form• Hazards• Harm potential• People affected• Risk severity, frequency, likelihood• Risk rating – low, medium, high, very high• Appropriate actions and control measures (eliminate, reduce, isolate, protective clothing)• Review of risks regularly



Risk assessment

Level of harm/severity:

Low – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – **High**

Likelihood of harm:

Low – 1 – 2 – 3 – 4 – 5 – **High**

The level of harm/severity score and the likelihood of harm score are multiplied together to give the risk rating.

Low – **Medium** – **High** – **Very High**



Risk rating example

Potential risk: client experiencing cardiac incident during exercise

Client	Likelihood	Level of harm	Score	Rating	Actions
Healthy adult, exercises regularly, no CVD risk factors	1	4-5	4-5	Medium	Maintain controls: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-screening• Monitor intensity• Warm up and cool down• Programme to meet specific needs
Older client, inactive, other CVD risk factors	4-5	5	20-25	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stop!• Signpost to GP• Direct to specialist and clinically supervised exercise



Risk management and control

- E** - Eliminate, if possible
- R** - Reduce the level of risk (if it cannot be eliminated)
- I** - Isolate the risk (minimise the number of people exposed)
- C** - Control (put controls in place, for example manual handling)
- P** - Protective clothing (supply and wear, as appropriate)



Whom to contact

- Line manager
- Organisation health and safety manager
- First aider
- Lifeguard
- External services
- Health and safety executive
- Fire officer
- Safeguarding officer
- Emergency services
- Duty manager



Managing special populations

Ensure procedures are in place for managing special populations during emergencies.

Consider specific needs of:

- People with disabilities
- Older adults
- Children



Children



- Stay calm
- Be in control
- Explain what is happening
- Listen and be sensitive to their feelings
- Give clear instructions



Disabled people

- May include:
 - Vulnerable adults
 - Some older adults, for example, frail
 - Blind or visual impaired
 - Deaf or hearing impaired
 - Wheelchair users
 - Physical limitations
- Assist evacuation
- Use stairs, not lifts
- Use additional aids or assistance, as required, for example, wheelchair



Safeguarding

- Protecting from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of health and development
- Ensuring provision of safe and effective care
- Ensuring optimum life chances
- Removing any risk of harm, neglect or abuse
- Following guidelines of legislation, for example:
 - The Children Act
 - The Police Act
 - The Protection Of Children Act
 - Every Child Matters Act
 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act
 - The Disability Discrimination Act
 - DBS (previously CRB) check



Definitions

Children

Any person under age 18. (NSPCC. 2014)

Vulnerable adult

Any person 'aged 18 years or over, who is in receipt of or in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.'

(Department of Health. 2000)



Responsibilities

Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Duty of care to safeguard children and adults during provision of service• Refer suspected and reported abuse to the designated employee, for example, safeguarding officer
Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refer, but not deal with suspected or reported abuse



Policies and procedures

Safeguarding policy

That outlines an organisations views in relation to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

Procedures may relate to staff:

- Relationships – appropriate boundaries, congruent, open, trust
- Responsibilities – to respect and champion the rights of vulnerable groups
- Behaviour – role modelling, correct behaviour, uniform
- Competence – qualifications, DBS checks
- Reporting suspected abuse
- Record keeping and confidentiality





Activity

Research some examples and signs of the following types of abuse which an instructor may encounter...

- Physical
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Bullying
- Sexual



Contact statutory agencies

- A vulnerable adult or child discloses abuse
- You witness abuse directly
- You notice signs of abuse
- Another person reports they have witnessed abuse
- Another person reports they have noticed signs of abuse

Take action!

- Follow organisation procedures
- The investigating services (police) will deal with the allegation



How to respond to disclosure

- Listen, without displaying shock, be calm
- Take them seriously, no judgement, no interrogation
- Tell them it is important that they have told you
- Explain the actions you need to take and why, for example, report to the safeguarding officer for their protection
- Reassure them
- Record the information and facts in writing
- Respond immediately
- Maintain contact with them, if possible
- Maintain confidentiality

Don't:

- Tell anyone who does not need to know
- Make contact with the alleged abuser





Activity

Research some of the statutory agencies responsible for safeguarding children and vulnerable adults...



Statutory agencies

- Safeguarding officer
- NSPCC
- Social services – child welfare and adult social care
- Police
- Safeguarding boards



Confidentiality

- Adhere to organisation procedures and guidance
- Only share information with relevant persons
- Record and report factual information
- Store records securely, for example, data protection





Learning check

- Identify the legal and regulatory requirements for health and safety relevant to working in a fitness environment
- Describe duty of care and professional role boundaries in relation to special population groups
- Describe how to manage emergencies in a fitness environment
- Identify three hazards in a fitness environment
- Describe how to manage and control the risk of those hazards from occurring
- Identify the key features of safeguarding
- Describe how to deal with a safeguarding incident





VTCT

USP183 - Professional practice for exercise and fitness professionals

LO2 Know how to maximise the customer experience within a fitness environment

Assessment criteria

- Know key principles relating to customer care
- Know how to provide a positive customer experience
- Know how to communicate with customers
- Know how to manage customer complaints
- Know how to promote products and services to meet customer needs
- Know how to work independently and with others



The importance of client care

For the client:

- Personalised customer service
- Enhanced customer experience
- Achievement of goals
- Needs and expectations met or exceeded

For the organisation:

- Reputation
- Avoidance of litigation
- Improved retention
- Growth of business – promoting products





Activity

- List the major contact points or people that a customer could meet within a gym environment
- List the responsibilities each or duties required to improve service or customer care



Examples of responsibilities and duties

- How to improve a customer's experience
- The importance of listening to a customer's wants and needs
- Obtaining customer feedback and monitoring customer provision and the effects of this on the customer experience
- The importance of dealing with client needs to their satisfaction
- Where to source relevant and appropriate information to meet client needs
- Dealing with any delay in meeting client needs effectively
- Using customer feedback to adapt the customer support and care provided
- Adhering to relevant legislation relating to customer satisfaction



Exceeding expectations

- Customer needs analysis – feedback, wants, expectations
- Provide service over and above what is expected
- Follow organisation's procedures
- Go the 'extra mile'

Examples:

- Level of personal attention and service provided
- Standard of exercise service provided
- Levels of personal communication experienced – use client names



Dealing with different client needs

For all customers:

- Maintain satisfaction
- Meet and exceed needs and expectations
- Achieve client goals
- Maintain confidence and trust
- Promote adherence and attendance
- Maintain professional and organisation image
- Positive word of mouth
- Potential increase in client base





Activity

- Think about in your current place of work. Where would you source relevant and appropriate information to meet client needs?

And

- Why is it important to deal with any delay in meeting client needs in a timely and effective way?



Sources of information

- Line manager
- E-mails
- REPs code of conduct
- Organisation's procedures
- Referral professionals – GP, physiotherapist, nutritionist
- Evidence based journals, websites, text books
- Customer feedback
- Legislation relating to customers (can you name some?)



Dealing with delays

- Maintain client satisfaction
- To stop any problems escalating
- Optimise effectiveness of service
- Maintain customer loyalty
- Minimise risk of relapse or drop-out
- Maintain reputation and professional image





Activity

Mind map how the following skills and characteristics can be used to enhance customer care:

- Personal qualities
- Professionalism
- Presentation
- Attitudes and values
- Behaviours and actions
- Forming effective relationships with others
- Interacting effectively with others



Communication skills

- **Face-to-face and telephone**

Active listening, open questioning, reflective and summarising statements

- **Written communication**

With consideration to language (appropriate for audience), grammar, punctuation, spelling and use of visual aids (posters, hyperlinks to social media, where appropriate)

- **Helpful helping skills**

Positive attitude, core conditions (empathy, positive regard, non-judgement), patience, trust and respect, polite, friendly, approachable, adaptability, willing to help, enthusiastic



Communication skills

- **Motivational interviewing**

Developing priorities and importance; building confidence and readiness; dealing with resistance to change, using open-ended questioning (and use of closed questions), reflective statements, paraphrasing, summarising, decisional balance sheet, active listening

- **Awareness of the effects of communication types and skills**

Positive and negative

- **Awareness of non-verbal communication** (own and customers)

For example, body language, eye contact, posture, gestures, spatial proximity



Handling complaints

- Acknowledge immediately
- Follow agreed procedures
- H.E.A.T
 - Hear
 - Empathise
 - Apologise
 - Take action
- Handle
 - Privately and positively
 - Confidently
 - Professionally
 - Promptly
 - Confidentially
 - Empathetically – trust and respect



Promoting products

Here's a list of the additional products and services that could be promoted within a health and fitness environment:

- Personal training sessions
- Specialist courses or sessions, for example, weight management
- Group exercise for example, circuits, indoor cycling
- Training products – clothing and footwear
- Pool-based activities – swimming and swimming lessons
- Racquet sports
- Sports massage
- Physiotherapist – injury and posture advice
- Nutritionist – dietary guidance
- Café – socialisation, rest, healthy eating
- Beauty therapy and spa facilities – self-care



Promoting products

Identify ways in which an organisation can promote products and services, taking into account the below:

- Face-to-face communication (walking the floor, reception enquiries)
- Social media
- Use of posters and displays
- Demonstrations and workshops
- Other customers, for example, satisfied customers
- Free trial sessions or sample products



Promoting products

Identify the benefits of working alone and within a team to achieve customer care, considering:

- Adaptability
- Confidence
- Team working
- Problem solving
- Conscientiousness
- Efficient time management
- Ability to plan and prepare own work
- Ability to identify areas for development
- Ability to follow instructions





Learning check

- Explain the importance of client care both for the client and the organisation
- Explain why it is important to deal with client needs to their satisfaction
- Identify where to source relevant and appropriate information to meet client needs
- Explain the importance of dealing with any delay in meeting client needs in a timely and effective way
- Give examples of how to exceed customer expectations, when appropriate
- Explain the importance of handling client complaints positively following an organisation's procedure





VTCT

USP183 - Professional practice for exercise and fitness professionals

LO3 Understand professional practice in a fitness environment

Assessment criteria

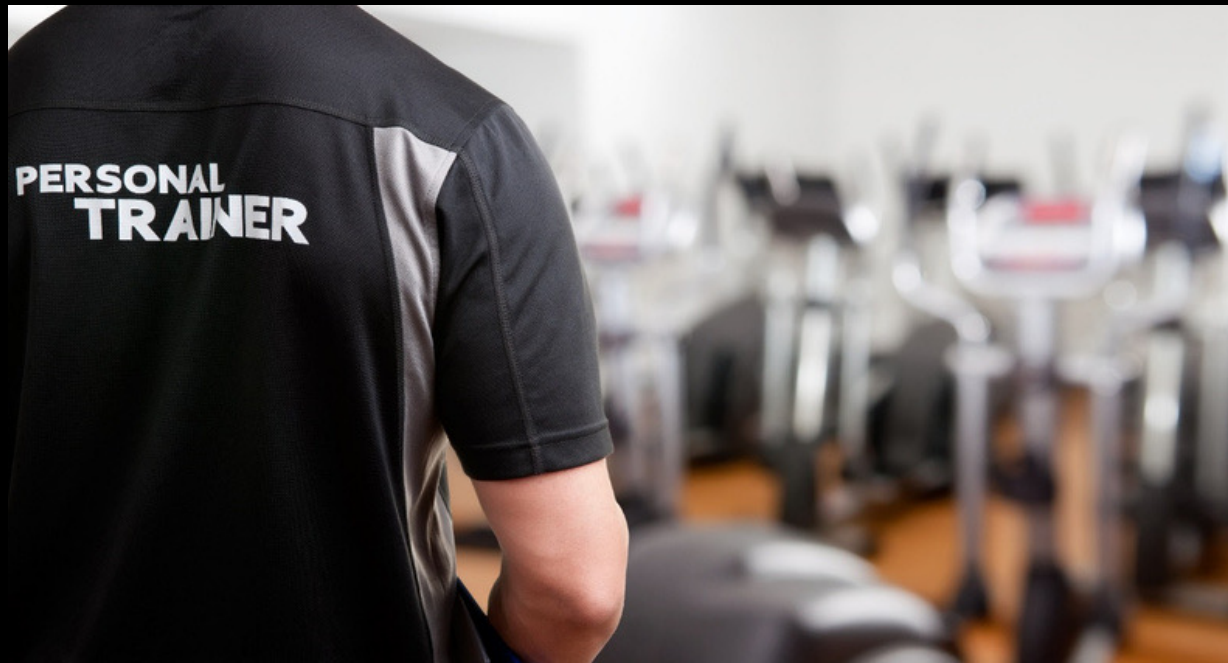
- Understand professional conduct and ethics in a fitness environment
- Understand the importance of reflective practice and continuing professional development
- Understand business acumen relevant to own role





Activity

What actions and behaviours do you need to possess that would portray a professional image in a fitness environment.



Personal conduct to portray a professional image

- Respectful of clients and other professionals
- Positive role model
- Empower others
- Personal integrity
- Motivating
- Honest and trustworthy
- Committed
- Non-judgemental
- Consistent
- Maintain role boundaries



Codes of ethics and conduct

Make a list of organisations that a fitness instructor can turn to for guidance on ethics and codes of practice.

- CIMSPA
- UK Active
- Europe Active
- REPS
- ACSM



Codes of ethics and conduct

What is the difference between code of ethics and code of conduct?

- The code of ethics is a moral standard that the company or organisation expects employees or fitness professionals to follow
- A code of conduct states how the company or organisation expects employees or fitness professional to behave. The code of conduct gets down to specific action expectations of the fitness professional



Codes of ethics and conduct

List some professional and ethical considerations within the role of a health and fitness professional.

Here are some examples:

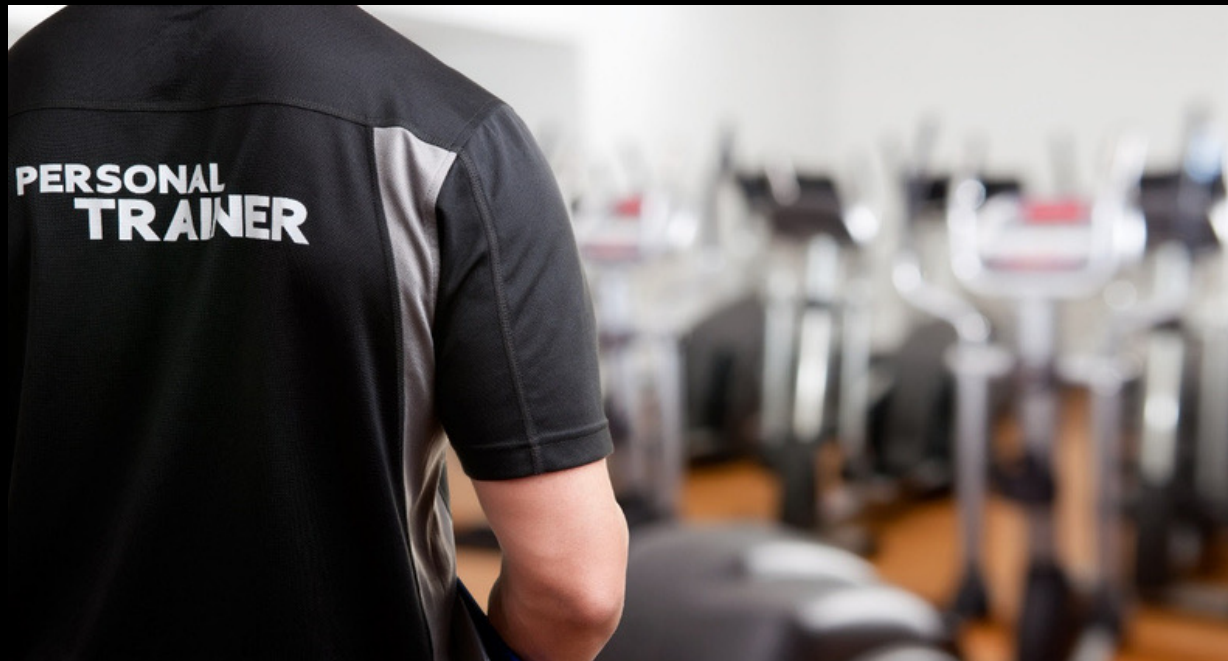
- Professional memberships and insurance
- Working within role boundaries/scope of practice and responsibilities
- Accurate representation of skills, abilities, and knowledge
- Appropriate interface with other relevant professionals
- Appropriate business practices and professional code of conduct





Activity

When did you last take part in reflective practice and continuous professional development in your current role?



Value of reflective practice and CPD

- Improve practice
- Get better
- Learning
- Develop skills and knowledge
- Career development
- Create action plan
- Continuing professional development
- Meet client needs
- Enhance reputation as instructor
- Enhance reputation of industry sector



What counts as CPD?

CPD can be achieved in many ways. The key is to record the information and reflect on how it develops you in your role.

Here are some examples:

- Own reflective practice
- Specific development courses
- Feedback from peers
- Feedback from customers
- Feedback and performance reviews/appraisals from line managers
- Attending relevant workshops
- Reading books and journals
- Use of reputable websites
- Reading relevant articles





Activity

What aspects of a fitness business would a fitness instructor need to know to develop their business acumen?



Aspects of the business

- Organisation's or own product offer and how to support secondary spends where appropriate
- Individual and organisational goals
- Targets and objectives (key performance indicators)
- Client-facing services and products
- Sales and how to grow a client base
- Activities to support business objectives and growth
- How to plan financially – profit and loss, tax, national insurance, liability insurance, music licences etc.





Learning check

- Explain the difference between codes of ethics and conduct
- List three ways in which you can portray a professional image
- Identify where to source relevant and appropriate information to meet client needs
- What and who do CIMSPA represent
- List three ways in which a fitness professional can benefit from reflective practice
- Explain why it is important to develop business acumen in a fitness environment





USP183 - Professional practice for exercise and fitness professionals

LO4 Know how information technology can be used in a fitness environment

Assessment criteria

- Know the different uses for information technology in a fitness environment
- Know how social media can be used as part of a fitness business





Activity

List the various IT systems that you will use to support your health and fitness business.



IT systems

- Finance and accounting – payroll, sales, invoicing etc.
- Marketing and sales – promotions, advertising, including the use of social media
- Class bookings and management
- Personal training – session reminders
- How data can be monitored and interpreted using a range of available systems for example, CRM, social media



Technological advancements

Identify how the following can be used to enhance the customer experience, then, provide an example for each:

- Wearable technology
- Pedometers
- Mobile phone applications



Legislation and technology

Think about how the following may affect the use of technology with your clients:

- Data protection act (GDPR)
- Intellectual property
- Patents and copyrights



Using social media in a fitness business

What benefits are there to using social media with your fitness business?

Think about:

- Help the campaign remain organised and on-track by allowing staff to look at the campaign plan to stay up-to-date
- Planning social media marketing campaigns allow the business to consider the appropriate social media channel for each message
- A business can quantify the success of the campaign and the uses of different social media by seeing if profits or bookings peaked directly after specific social media use
- Allow for appropriate planning of future campaigns. For example, a reduced rate training session for students could be advertised at a weekend or evening when students are more likely to be browsing social media
- Pre-planning social media campaigns saves a great deal of time. It means that the information can be posted immediately by any member of staff as the content has already been agreed and approved



Drawbacks of using social media

- Social media profiles used by companies to portray the company image and brand at all times
- Appropriate language, tone and content should be used at all times to create a professional image of the business
- The business could create an unprofessional or inconsistent image which could result in the loss of customers
- Social media is an open forum for people to express their opinions – both good and bad



Drawbacks of using social media

- Negative comments and feedback left on social media can be viewed or shared by anyone very quickly resulting in harmful publicity to a business
- The importance of keeping consistency when using social media for marketing purposes
- If social media campaign plans are not in place or followed correctly this could result in communications being contradictory or misunderstood
- A drawback of social media could be lack of use – if social media is not regularly checked and updated queries from customers could be missed





Activity

Identify a social media platform of your choice and plan how you would use the platform to promote an exercise class you have to deliver





Learning check

- What IT systems are typically used in a fitness environment?
- Describe one wearable technology and how it can be used by a gym instructor
- How does the data protection act affect the use of social media in a fitness business?
- List three benefits of using social media
- List three negative aspects of using social media

