



Qualification  
Specification

# Active IQ Level 2 Technical Specialist in Instructing Circuit Training (Award)

Qualification  
Accreditation Number:

**610/4549/4**

Version AIQ006709

**Active iQ**

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## Introduction

The Active IQ Level 2 Technical Specialist in Instructing Circuit Training (Award) is at level 2 on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF). This qualification has been approved by IfATE, Ofqual and DfE to be recognised as an Additional Specialist Technical Qualification. This qualification builds on the outcomes within an occupational standard and enables an individual to specialise in an occupation having achieved the specialist qualification in addition to their attainment of outcomes set out in the standard.

|                               |    |                                  |    |
|-------------------------------|----|----------------------------------|----|
| <b>Guided learning hours:</b> | 25 | <b>Total qualification time:</b> | 40 |
|-------------------------------|----|----------------------------------|----|

## Entry requirements:

- A suitable Level 2 fitness instructing qualification, for example:
  - Active IQ Level 2 Certificate in Gym Instructing.
  - Active IQ Level 2 Certificate in Group Training.
  - Active IQ Level 2 Certificate in Fitness Instructing.
- Some experience of circuit training may be useful.
- The course requires physical exertion and individual participation is essential, therefore a degree of physical fitness is necessary.
- There is an element of communication (discussing, presenting, reading and writing) involved and learners should have basic skills in communication pitched at level 2.

## Qualification outline

### Target learners:

- Learners aged 16+.
- Qualified fitness instructors wishing to widen their skills to offer circuit training.

### Purpose

The purpose of this Additional Specialist Technical Qualification is to provide learners with an understanding of the legal and professional requirements of a circuit training instructor. Learners are provided with an understanding of the key concepts of circuit training and how technology can be used in circuit training sessions. Learners are also provided with the knowledge and skills to be able to plan, prepare and deliver safe and effective group circuit sessions and one-to-one mini-circuit sessions.

This qualification includes the essential knowledge and skills that are needed to meet the requirements of the physical activity sector's minimum standards for deployment.

Learners who achieve this qualification will:

Understand:

- Legal and professional requirements for group and individual circuit training.
- The skills, motivations and behaviours needed for delivering group and individual circuit training.
- The principles of fitness relevant to circuit training.
- How technology can be used in circuit training sessions.
- The safety considerations when instructing a circuit training session.
- How to clean and maintain portable circuit training equipment.

Have demonstrated:

- How to plan a safe and effective group circuit training session.
- How to plan a safe and effective one-to-one mini-circuit training session.
- How to deliver a safe and effective group circuit training session.
- How to deliver a safe and effective one-to-one mini-circuit training session.
- How to evaluate own practice.

### **Progression**

This qualification provides progression to:

- Active IQ Level 2 Technical Specialist in Instructing Kettlebells (Award).
- Active IQ Level 2 Technical Specialist in Instructing Studio Cycling Sessions (Award).
- Active IQ Level 3 Technical Occupational Entry in Personal Training (Diploma).
- Active IQ Level 3 Technical Specialist in Sports Massage Therapy (Diploma).
- Apprenticeship in Personal Training.

### **Links to National Standards**

There are links to:

- The Leisure Team Member Apprenticeship standard (ST0390).
- The Community Activator Coach Apprenticeship standard (ST0478).
- The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) Learning and Development Requirements (LDR).

# Occupational competence statements for tutors, assessors and internal verifiers

**This section outlines the requirements for tutoring, assessing and internally verifying Active IQ qualifications.**

## **Required criteria**

All tutors, assessors and internal verifiers must:

- Possess a discipline-specific qualification equivalent to the qualification being taught.
- Have relevant industry experience.
- Demonstrate active involvement in a process of industry-relevant continuing professional development during the last two years (this may be discipline-/context-specific or relevant to tutoring assessing or quality assurance).

## **Tutors and assessors**

Tutors must hold, or be working towards, a teaching qualification.

The following are acceptable:

- Level 3 Award in Education and Training.
- Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training.
- Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training.
- Certificate in Education (including professional and postgraduate).
- Qualified Teaching and Learning Skills.

## **Assessors**

Assessors must hold, or be working towards, any of the following:

- Level 3 Award in Understanding the Principles and Practices of Assessment.
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement.
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment.
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement.
- A1 (previously D32, D33).

## **Internal verifiers**

Internal verifiers must hold, or be working towards, any of the following:

- Level 4 Award in Understanding the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice.
- Level 4 Award in the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice.
- Level 4 Certificate in Leading the Internal Quality Assurance of Assessment Processes and Practice.
- V1 (previously D34).

All new assessors and quality assurance staff must be given a clear action plan for achieving the appropriate qualification(s) and should be countersigned by an appropriately qualified individual until the qualification(s) has been achieved.

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## Qualification structure

Learners must complete the mandatory unit.

| Unit | Unit accreditation number                 | Level      | GLH | TQT |    |
|------|---|------------|-----|-----|----|
| 1    | Planning and instructing circuit training | A/650/8793 | 2   | 25  | 40 |

## Assessment Design

The assessments for the Active IQ Level 2 Technical Specialist in Instructing Circuit Training (Award) have been designed to ensure they are valid, fit for purpose and meet the requirements of a technical specialist qualification. We have focused on the reliability and validity of the assessments, to ensure that a learner who successfully completes this qualification is well placed to secure employment in roles related to this standard.

The assessments for this Additional Specialist Technical Qualification consist of the following:

| Assessment | Assessment component title  | Assessment method           | Unit  |
|------------|---|-----------------------------|---|
| 1          | Personal skills, legal and professional requirements                      | Knowledge assessment        | Unit 1: Planning and instructing circuit training |
| 2          | Principles of circuit training and the use of technology                  |                             |   |
| 3          | Circuit training safety and equipment maintenance                         |                             |   |
| 4          | Planning a safe and effective group circuit training session              | Assignment                  |   |
| 5          | Instructing a safe and effective group circuit training session           | Observation and questioning |   |
| 6          | Planning a safe and effective one-to-one mini-circuit training session    | Assignment                  |   |
| 7          | Instructing a safe and effective one-to-one mini-circuit training session | Observation and questioning |   |
| 8          | Evaluating own practice   | Assignment                  |   |

## Assessment methods

The following lists the assessment methods used in this qualification, with a description of how they are intended to work.

- **Knowledge assessment**

The knowledge assessments use a range of different question types to assess the learner's cognitive abilities, retention of knowledge and factual recall. The different types of questions include multiple choice, short essays, drag and drop into text and scenario-/video-based questions and answers. The different question types give learners an opportunity to demonstrate achievement in a range of different contexts, allowing learners to apply their knowledge in real-life scenarios linked to the qualification's purpose. Each knowledge assessment has a minimum pass mark of 70%.

- **Assignment**

These assessments use clearly constructed briefs/tasks and associated marking schemes to assess learners' cognitive abilities and/or practical competencies.

This assessment method allows learners to demonstrate problem solving, analytical, research and planning skills. Each assignment has a minimum pass mark of 80% against a pre-set mark scheme.

- **Observation and questioning**

An observation assesses the learner's competence, skills and behaviour through the application of knowledge. This assessment method will also provide an opportunity for the learner to be assessed holistically across the standard.

The focus of the questioning will be on the knowledge, skills and behaviours that are assessed within the observation and in particular on criteria that the learner was unable to demonstrate competence in due to them not occurring naturally. Questions may also be on criteria that have been partially demonstrated during the observation. The purpose of the questions and answers session is not to re-assess criteria that the learner did not achieve as a result of not being competent.

The performance observed and responses to questions will be assessed holistically as part of this assessment method. This assessment is a valid way to assess the learner's knowledge, skills and behaviours in a real-life context, and suitably prepares the learner for the role and demands of a technical specialist in instructing circuit training. Observations are either pass or refer against set criteria.

## Grading

To achieve this qualification, learners must achieve a pass in all of the assessments.

The overall grade for this qualification is **Pass/Refer**.

**Unit 1 A/650/8793**    **Level: 2**    **GLH: 25**    **TQT: 40**  
**Unit Title:** Planning and instructing circuit training

| <b>Learning outcomes</b><br><i>The learner will:</i>   | <b>Assessment criteria</b><br><i>The learner can:</i>  | <b>Indicative content</b><br><i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>   |
|--|--|---|
| 1. Understand the legal and professional requirements for group and individual circuit training                  | 1.1 Describe the <b>legal and ethical responsibilities</b> of a circuit instructor<br>1.2 Explain the personal insurance requirements of a circuit instructor<br>1.3 Outline the health, safety and insurance requirements when hiring venues or facilities<br>1.4 Explain the term ‘duty of care’ relating to the health and safety of self and others<br>1.5 Explain the licensing requirements of a circuit instructor, for example, music usage rights | <b>Legal and ethical responsibilities</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Screening</li> <li>• Recording information</li> <li>• Record-keeping</li> <li>• Client confidentiality</li> </ul>   |
| 2. Understand the skills, motivations and behaviours needed for delivering group and individual circuit training | 2.1 Identify ways that an instructor can help customers have a <b>positive exercise experience</b><br>2.2 Identify ways that an instructor can build social support and inclusion within a group circuit environment<br>2.3 Explain the <b>physical abilities and coaching skills</b> that are beneficial for delivering a circuit training session  | <b>Positive exercise experience</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building rapport</li> <li>• Motivation and engagement</li> <li>• Effective communication skills</li> </ul> <b>Physical abilities and coaching skills</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sufficient level of fitness</li> <li>• Good movement awareness</li> <li>• Broad exercise technique knowledge</li> <li>• Group training management</li> <li>• Structured and organised</li> <li>• Motivational and encouraging</li> </ul> |



| <b>Learning outcomes</b><br><i>The learner will:</i>                        | <b>Assessment criteria</b><br><i>The learner can:</i>   | <b>Indicative content</b><br><i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>  |
|---|---|--|
| <p>3. Understand the principles of fitness relevant to circuit training</p> | <p>3.1 Identify the benefits of circuit training for the instructor and for the circuit participants</p> <p>3.2 Describe a <b>range of settings</b> where circuit training is commonly applied</p> <p>3.3 Describe a <b>range of different</b> methods of circuit training that may be used</p> <p>3.4 Describe a <b>range of different types</b> of circuit training layout that may be applied</p> <p>3.5 Explain how to adopt an optimal teaching/instructing position dependent on circuit layout and group movement dynamics</p> <p>3.6 Identify the circuit types and circuit training layouts that are adaptable for delivery to an individual client</p> <p>3.7 State the recommended <b>work-to-recovery ratio</b> for circuit training sessions</p> <p>3.8 Explain how to monitor exercise intensity during a circuit training session</p> <p>3.9 Describe the purpose of active recovery during a circuit training session</p> | <p>A <b>range of settings</b> may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studio-based group class</li> <li>• Studio-based individual session</li> <li>• Gym-based group class</li> <li>• Gym-based individual session</li> <li>• Field-based sports teams</li> <li>• In-community targeted groups</li> </ul> <p>A <b>range of different methods</b> may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timed circuit</li> <li>• Command circuit</li> <li>• Bodyweight-only circuit</li> <li>• Progressive colour circuit</li> <li>• Repetition circuit</li> <li>• Sports-specific circuit</li> <li>• Obstacle circuit</li> <li>• Two-thirds workload circuit</li> <li>• HIIT circuit</li> <li>• Peripheral heart action (PHA) circuit</li> <li>• Compound strength circuit</li> <li>• Conditioning circuit</li> </ul> <p>A <b>range of different types</b> may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satellite circuit</li> <li>• MSE satellite – aerobic unison</li> <li>• Radial circuit</li> <li>• Follow the leader circuit</li> <li>• Bow-tie – aerobic</li> <li>• Themed squares – strength</li> </ul> |

| <b>Learning outcomes</b><br><i>The learner will:</i>                         | <b>Assessment criteria</b><br><i>The learner can:</i>  | <b>Indicative content</b><br><i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Themed training zones</li> <li>• Paired strength</li> <li>• 2 Forward, 1 back</li> <li>• Once through</li> <li>• Lined groups</li> <li>• Shuttle run circuit</li> <li>• Bleep test circuit</li> <li>• Work, rest, play circuit</li> <li>• Ton Up</li> </ul> <p>The <b>work-to-recovery ratio</b> to be based upon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Type of circuit training session</li> <li>• Order of progression through the circuit</li> <li>• Primary training objectives</li> </ul> |
| <p>4. Understand how technology can be used in circuit training sessions</p> | <p>4.1 Explain how <b>technology</b> may assist clients to increase their activity levels</p> <p>4.2 Explain how technology can enhance client motivation and focus to help them achieve their goals</p> <p>4.3 Describe ways that fitness professionals can engage with their clients, using current technology, to include in-person and digital remote sessions</p> <p>4.4 Explain how to monitor and promote safe exercise technique when delivering online sessions</p> | <p><b>Technology</b> may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring heart rate during exercise</li> <li>• Smart-phone exercise applications</li> <li>• Wearable fitness-tracking technology</li> </ul>  |

| <b>Learning outcomes</b><br><i>The learner will:</i>                                | <b>Assessment criteria</b><br><i>The learner can:</i>   | <b>Indicative content</b><br><i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>   |
|---|---|---|
| 5. Understand the safety considerations when instructing a circuit training session | 5.1 Identify the <b>safety considerations</b> relating to circuit training<br>5.2 Identify the potential hazards that may occur within a circuit training environment<br>5.3 Describe how to resolve safety hazards and manage risk levels within the circuit training environment<br>5.4 Identify a range of contraindications to circuit training that may prevent participation and require medical guidance | <b>Safety considerations</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal screening prior to participation</li> <li>• Exercise selection matched to target client</li> <li>• Equipment set-up and safety check</li> <li>• Equipment layout and spacing</li> <li>• Range of weights/resistance offered</li> <li>• Ongoing observation of exercise technique</li> <li>• Lower risk exercise alternatives</li> <li>• Rest, recovery, and hydration</li> </ul>  |
| 6. Understand how to clean and maintain portable circuit training equipment         | 6.1 Identify a range of commonly used <b>portable fitness equipment</b> well-suited to a group circuit session<br>6.2 Describe the appropriate checks required to ensure the safety and cleanliness of circuit training equipment<br>6.3 Explain how to store and maintain circuit training equipment to prevent damage and enhance long-term usability   | <b>Portable fitness equipment</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Studio barbells</li> <li>• Dumbbells</li> <li>• Kettlebells</li> <li>• Medicine balls</li> <li>• Sandbags</li> <li>• Mats</li> <li>• Resistance bands</li> <li>• Suspension straps</li> <li>• Stability balls</li> <li>• BOSU balls</li> <li>• Skipping ropes</li> <li>• Battling ropes</li> <li>• Plyometric boxes</li> <li>• Agility ladders</li> <li>• Mini hurdles</li> <li>• Boxing gloves/pads/bags</li> <li>• Mini trampolines/rebounders</li> <li>• Spinning bikes</li> </ul> |

| <b>Learning outcomes</b><br><i>The learner will:</i>                                 | <b>Assessment criteria</b><br><i>The learner can:</i>  | <b>Indicative content</b><br><i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>   |
|--|--|---|
| 7. Be able to plan a safe and effective individual or group circuit training session | 7.1 Plan a safe and effective individual client circuit training session, selecting an appropriate format and layout that aligns well to a single client<br>7.2 Plan a safe and effective <b>group circuit training session</b> to meet clients' needs and incorporate different components of fitness<br>7.3 Plan adaptations and modifications to meet the needs of the group or individual participants<br>7.4 <b>Select appropriate music</b> for the components of the session<br>7.5 Record the session plan using an appropriate format | <b>Group circuit training session</b> to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Target client</li> <li>• Class objective</li> <li>• Class duration</li> <li>• Circuit type</li> <li>• Circuit layout and progress route</li> <li>• Exercises selection and alternatives</li> <li>• Exercise order</li> <li>• Number of circuits</li> <li>• Sets and repetitions</li> <li>• Work:rest ratios, including active recovery</li> <li>• Warm up and cool down activities</li> </ul> <b>Select appropriate music</b> to consider these factors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intended atmosphere</li> <li>• Motivation level needed</li> <li>• Speed of track</li> <li>• Music genre</li> <li>• Lyrics</li> </ul> |

| <b>Learning outcomes</b><br><i>The learner will:</i>                                    | <b>Assessment criteria</b><br><i>The learner can:</i>  | <b>Indicative content</b><br><i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>   |
|---|--|---|
| <p>8. Be able to prepare clients and the environment for a circuit training session</p> | <p>8.1 Set up the planned circuit training session in advance, considering exercise equipment, layout, audio equipment, and anticipated participant numbers</p> <p>8.2 Carry out a risk assessment on the chosen circuit training environment.</p> <p>8.3 Use <b>appropriate methods and communication</b> skills</p> <p>8.4 Provide appropriate <b>advice and guidance</b> in response to information gathered</p> <p>8.5 Explain the appropriate <b>health and safety</b> considerations</p> <p>8.6 Describe the importance of physical warm-up and preparation of the body for a circuit training session</p> <p>8.7 Prior to the commencement of the circuit, demonstrate the correct technique for each exercise and how to use the equipment at each circuit station</p> | <p><b>Appropriate methods and communication</b> may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greet and welcome clients</li> <li>• Build rapport</li> <li>• Gather client information and determine readiness to exercise</li> </ul> <p><b>Advice and guidance</b> may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When to signpost to a medical professional</li> <li>• When to defer training</li> <li>• When to allow participation in training to proceed</li> </ul> <p><b>Health and safety</b> to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe and appropriate use of circuit equipment</li> <li>• Layout, format, and route through the circuit</li> <li>• Training space and awareness of other participants</li> <li>• Water and hydration</li> <li>• Sweat towel</li> </ul> |

| <b>Learning outcomes</b><br><i>The learner will:</i>                                    | <b>Assessment criteria</b><br><i>The learner can:</i>  | <b>Indicative content</b><br><i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>  |
|---|--|--|
| 9. Be able to deliver a safe and effective group or individual circuit training session | 9.1 Use appropriate <b>group instructional/coaching methods</b> to optimise the performance of the client<br>9.2 Use <b>effective communication skills</b> to support and enhance instructional/coaching methods<br>9.3 Use a <b>head microphone</b> , where appropriate, when instructing group circuits<br>9.4 Instruct a safe and effective warm-up<br>9.5 Instruct a <b>safe and effective main session</b><br>9.6 Instruct a safe and effective cool-down<br>9.7 Monitor exercise safety throughout the session<br>9.8 Adapt or modify exercises, as appropriate, to accommodate clients' needs<br>9.9 Respond accurately/appropriately to clients' questions<br>9.10 Promptly clear away and leave the circuit training space in good order. | <b>Group instructional/coaching methods</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise explanation</li> <li>• Memorable coaching points</li> <li>• Repeat exercise demonstration</li> <li>• Observation of client performance</li> <li>• Cueing client movement</li> <li>• Positive correction</li> <li>• Exercise adaptation</li> <li>• Praise and encouragement</li> </ul> <b>Effective communication skills</b> to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate eye contact</li> <li>• Efficient, clear verbal direction</li> <li>• Body language to enhance verbal explanation</li> <li>• Effective use of voice, to include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjustment of tone and pitch</li> <li>• Variation in volume</li> <li>• Use of silence/no vocals</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <b>Head microphone</b> may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optimal audio set-up</li> <li>• Management of voice projection</li> <li>• Appropriate use of volume</li> </ul> <b>Safe and effective main session</b> to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain the circuit format and exercise order</li> <li>• Exercise demonstrations</li> <li>• Assign participants to initial stations</li> <li>• Run and administrate the circuit session</li> <li>• Provide group and individual motivation</li> </ul> |

| <b>Learning outcomes</b><br><i>The learner will:</i> | <b>Assessment criteria</b><br><i>The learner can:</i>  | <b>Indicative content</b><br><i>This is provided as a guide for delivery, learners may not be assessed against all of the indicative content.</i>  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best observational and instructional position</li> <li>• Manage circuit participant progression route</li> <li>• Monitor and sustain appropriate exercise intensity</li> <li>• Support the one, but remain group aware</li> </ul> |
| 10. Be able to evaluate own practice                 | 10.1 Gather client feedback to review and evaluate the circuit training session structure<br>10.2 Identify ways to improve session structure to better meet client/group needs in future sessions<br>10.3 Evaluate the instructional and communication skills used to train the client/group<br>10.4 Identify ways to improve instruction and communication in future sessions<br>10.5 Evaluate the overall safety of the exercise session |  |
| <b>Assessment</b>                                    | Knowledge assessments<br>Assignments<br>Observation and questioning  |  |

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| VERSION NUMBER | DATE       | NOTES              |
|----------------|------------|--------------------|
| AIQ006709      | 14/08/2024 | DOCUMENT PUBLISHED |
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