



Qualification  
Guidance

# Active IQ Level 4 Certificate in Nutrition Coaching

Qualification  
Accreditation Number:  
**603/4330/8**  
Version AIQ005661

**Active iQ**

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# Active IQ Level 4 Certificate in Nutrition Coaching

## Qualification accreditation number: 603/4330/8

### Introduction

The Active IQ Level 4 Certificate in Nutrition Coaching is at Level 4 on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF).

<b>Guided learning hours:</b>	50	<b>Total qualification time:</b>	250
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### Entry requirements:

- Learners must have a basic level of nutritional knowledge, this can be in the form of an accredited qualification, e.g. Active IQ Level 3 Award in Nutrition for Exercise and Health or Active IQ Level 3 Diploma in Personal Training or non-accredited training, e.g. BTN Foundation Academy.
- Learners will need basic IT skills, and at least GCSE-level reading comprehension.
- The course is purely online so learners will need access to a computer with a stable internet connection.

### Qualification outline

#### Target learners:

- Personal trainers or gym owners looking to diversify their offering by adding nutrition coaching to their skillset.
- Individuals looking to change careers and work online or in person as a nutrition coach.

#### Purpose

The purpose of this qualification is to provide learners with the knowledge and understanding to be able to help clients improve their nutritional habits through personalised coaching. Learners will be able to provide individualised, non-prescriptive, evidence-based advice to clients.

During the qualification learners will cover:

- The role of a nutrition coach, including remit of practice and responsibilities.
- The process of digestion, absorption and utilisation of nutrients.
- The generalisable principles of nutrition:
  - How to elicit fat loss and muscle gain through diet.
  - How to monitor and adjust things over time.
- How to adapt the generalised principles of nutrition for various populations with differing goals and health states.
- How to perform an effective consultation.
- How to read research in order to objectively assess new information.
- The behavioural aspects of nutrition change, including the psychology of behavioural modification.

#### Progression

This qualification provides progression on to:

- Subject related Higher Education Degrees – Pending.
- Other specialist Level 4 qualifications.
- Other related qualifications, e.g.
  - Active IQ Level 4 Certificate in Advanced Personal Training.
  - Active IQ Level 4 Certificate in Strength and Conditioning.
  - Active IQ Level 4 Certificate in Postural Assessment and Corrective Exercise.

# Occupational competence statements for tutoring, assessing and internally verifying

**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) are achieved.

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### Qualification structure

Learners must complete the five mandatory units..

#### Mandatory units

	Unit	Unit accreditation number	Level	GLH	TQT
1	Evidence-based principles of nutrition	Y/617/5352	4	14	70
2	Conducting research and consultations for nutrition coaching	D/617/5353	4	10	50
3	Applying evidence-based practice to nutrition coaching	H/617/5354	4	6	30
4	Nutrition coaching for sports performance	K/617/5355	4	8	40
5	Nutrition coaching for special populations	M/617/5356	4	12	60

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <b>The learner will:</b>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <b>The learner can:</b>
1. Understand the process of digestion, absorption and utilisation of nutrients	1.1 Describe the structure of the digestive system 1.2 Describe the process of digestion in each section of the alimentary canal (mouth, oesophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine) 1.3 Describe the process of glucose storage in muscle and liver tissue 1.4 Describe how to maintain blood glucose levels 1.5 Compare the structure and function of the primary lipoproteins (HDL, LDL and Chylomicrons)
2. Understand how nutrients are used in the body	2.1 Describe the process of aerobic glycolysis 2.2 Describe the process of anaerobic glycolysis 2.3 Describe the process of lipolysis 2.4 Describe the process of gluconeogenesis 2.5 Describe the process of glycogenesis 2.6 Differentiate between situations in which anaerobic or aerobic glycolysis would be used 2.7 Explain why different exercise intensities necessitate different nutritional sources of energy
3. Understand the process of DNA transcription, translation and replication	3.1 Explain the nutritional trigger for protein synthesis 3.2 Explain the key differences between DNA and RNA 3.3 Describe the human genome 3.4 Describe the genetic code 3.5 Describe the process of transcription 3.6 Describe the process of translation 3.7 Describe the process of replication
4. Understand the role of energy balance for body composition changes	4.1 Explain the homeostatic control of energy balance and its relationship with weight loss and weight gain 4.2 Compare expected energy expenditure of specific individuals 4.3 Explain how to adjust an individual's nutritional intake to elicit weight loss or gain in an appropriate timeframe 4.4 Calculate the calorie surplus or deficit appropriate for a given client and their goals 4.5 Explain the positive and negative consequences of large and small calorie deficits or surpluses

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <b>The learner will:</b>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <b>The learner can:</b>
5. Understand the role of alcohol in a healthy diet	5.1 Explain how alcohol is metabolised 5.2 Explain the effect that drinking alcohol has on energy balance 5.3 Summarise the UK guidelines for alcohol consumption 5.4 Evaluate the practical advice that can be given to clients to minimise harm from drinking alcohol
<b>Assessment</b>	eAssessment

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <b>The learner will:</b>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <b>The learner can:</b>
1. Understand the role of a nutrition coach	1.1 Explain the scope of practice of a nutrition coach, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special populations</li> <li>• Sports performance</li> </ul> 1.2 Explain the process to follow when asked to work outside of the scope of practice of a nutrition coach 1.3 Explain the role of a nutrition coach in assisting clients to make informed eating choices 1.4 Describe a simple process for closing a sale and overcoming barriers, including financial ones
2. Understand how to research and use information	2.1 Describe what is meant by evidence-based practice for nutrition 2.2 Explain the importance of evidence-based practice 2.3 Describe the structure of research papers 2.4 Evaluate information presented in research papers 2.5 Differentiate between fact and opinion 2.6 Differentiate between evidence-based, eminence-based and experience-based practice 2.7 Identify useful information within a research paper 2.8 Explain how information from research papers can be used to support clients
3. Understand the client consultation process	3.1 Explain the importance of a PAR-Q and client agreement 3.2 Analyse the types of information that can be collected from a client during a consultation, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Current eating habits</li> <li>• Food diary</li> <li>• Food likes/ dislikes</li> <li>• Physical activity levels</li> </ul> 3.3 Explain how to develop rapport with clients 3.4 Explain the importance of developing a rapport with clients from the initial contact 3.5 Translate aims in to Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound goals 3.6 Explain the process of checking in, assessing and adjusting goals, and improving adherence over time 3.7 Explain the benefits of speaking on a regular basis to a client via phone or web chat



<b>Learning outcomes</b> <b>The learner will:</b>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <b>The learner can:</b>
4. Understand how to assess a client's readiness for change	4.1 Describe behaviour change theories to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transtheoretical Model</li> <li>• Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs</li> </ul> 4.2 Explain how behaviour change theories can be applied to nutrition coaching 4.3 Explain how to use questioning to assess a client's readiness to change 4.4 Analyse motivational statements and determine their internal or external nature 4.5 Describe motivational interviewing 4.6 Explain how motivational interviewing can improve a client's readiness to change 4.7 Describe the Self Determination Theory 4.8 Evaluate the effectiveness of client-coach conversations 4.9 Explain when motivational interviewing could be used
5. Understand the psychological, physiological and environmental barriers that may need to be overcome during the process of change	5.1 Describe the influences that can contribute to the development and maintenance of obesity. For example, cravings, binges, addiction, finances, time, family and genetics 5.2 Describe the steps used to overcome some of the most common barriers a client will face 5.3 Analyse strategies that can be implemented when barriers can't be eliminated 5.4 Describe differences in brain chemistry between obese and lean people 5.5 Analyse the influence that the food environment can have on a person's eating decisions and behaviour, both in the eating setting and in the broader world
<b>Assessment</b>	eAssessment

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <b>The learner will:</b>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <b>The learner can:</b>
1. Understand the benefits and drawbacks of intermittent fasting	1.1 Compare intermittent fasting with a typical nutritional intake 1.2 Critically analyse the claimed benefits of intermittent fasting 1.3 Explain how intermittent fasting may assist fat loss 1.4 Explain the possible disadvantages associated with intermittent fasting
2. Understand ketogenic dieting	2.1 Describe what is meant by a 'ketogenic state' 2.2 Describe how to implement a ketogenic diet 2.3 Explain how a ketogenic diet can be implemented to have minimal negative health effects 2.4 Explain the effects of a ketogenic diet on body composition and athletic performance
3. Understand how to plan and adjust a fat loss approach over time	3.1 Explain why programming is important for fat loss nutrition 3.2 Describe the effect of dieting on leptin 3.3 Compare and contrast a refeed and a diet break 3.4 Evaluate the benefits and limitations of a linear diet 3.5 Estimate the theoretical ideal macronutrient intake for a given individual based upon a calorie target
4. Know how to maximise hypertrophy nutritionally	4.1 Describe the ideal range of protein intake for a specific individual 4.2 Explain why an individual may opt for the upper or lower end of the protein intake range 4.3 Explain the need for a per-meal and per-day target of protein 4.4 Identify ideal protein intake for a range of clients 4.5 Explain the relationship between the other macronutrients and hypertrophy 4.6 Explain the ideal pre- and post-workout nutritional approach

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <b>The learner will:</b>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <b>The learner can:</b>
5. Understand how to track and monitor fat loss/ muscle gain	5.1 Critically compare a range of measurement techniques for monitoring fat loss/ muscle gain, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scale weight</li> <li>• Anthropometric measurements</li> <li>• Skinfolds (3, 4 and 7-site)</li> <li>• Bioelectrical impedance</li> <li>• Photographs</li> </ul> 5.2 Describe how to select the appropriate measurement technique for individual clients 5.3 Explain the importance of communicating the necessity of collecting body composition measurements
6. Understand how to track and monitor food intake	6.1 Describe the different methods of tracking food intake 6.2 Explain the benefits and limitations of each method 6.3 Demonstrate matching a tracking method with a client's needs and goals 6.4 Describe the problems with food tracking for those predisposed to disordered eating 6.5 Critically assess the food reporting of clients 6.6 Describe the frequency with which food intakes are misreported 6.7 Explain how to discuss the accuracy of food intake tracking with clients
<b>Assessment</b>	eAssessment

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <b>The learner will:</b>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <b>The learner can:</b>
1. Understand how to provide nutrition coaching for an endurance athlete	1.1 Explain a range of methods for estimating an endurance athlete's calorie needs 1.2 Analyse an endurance event and determine an appropriate supplemental approach 1.3 Define Relative Energy Deficiency in Sports (RED-S) 1.4 Identify the athletes most at risk of RED-S 1.5 Describe the health and performance implications of RED-S 1.6 Compare ketogenic approaches and non-ketogenic approaches to diet for athletes at risk of RED-S 1.7 Evaluate the macronutrient requirements of an endurance athlete compared to recreational trainers
2. Understand how to provide nutrition coaching for a sports team	2.1 Analyse sports athletes' day-to-day activities to determine the ideal calorie and macronutrient requirements 2.2 Analyse the differing nutritional needs of individuals within a sports team related to their position/role 2.3 Differentiate between in-season and off-season nutritional requirements 2.4 Explain the importance of gaining the trust of a sports team 2.5 Describe how to gain a sports team's trust and engage in a positive nutritional culture 2.6 Explain the unique difficulties associated with 'game-day' nutritional management 2.7 Describe the challenge presented by body composition and strength changes in-season, and compare this to off-season
3. Understand how to prepare a physique athlete for competition	3.1 Describe the macronutrient requirements when preparing for a physique competition 3.2 Explain the process of determining calorie intake for each stage of competition preparation 3.3 Critically analyse a peak week approach for effectiveness and optimisation 3.4 Evaluate the necessity for peak week approaches 3.5 Explain the process of 'reverse dieting' back to a maintenance or surplus calorie intake 3.6 Explain the health risks of preparing for a physique competition

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <b>The learner will:</b>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <b>The learner can:</b>
4. Understand how to help a weight class athlete prepare for competition	4.1 Differentiate between losing weight and cutting weight 4.2 Evaluate the benefits and risks of cutting weight 4.3 Identify the maximum amount of weight than can likely be cut safely at differing weigh-in points 4.4 Describe the different methods that can be used to cut weight 4.5 Describe methods of rehydrating after a weight cut
5. Understand the effects of image and performance enhancing drugs	5.1 Describe the positive and negative effects of using image and performance enhancing drugs 5.2 Identify the typical users of image and performance enhancing drugs 5.3 Explain the motivations for using image and performance enhancing drugs
<b>Assessment</b>	eAssessment

<b>Learning outcomes</b> <b>The learner will:</b>	<b>Assessment criteria</b> <b>The learner can:</b>
1. Understand how the menstrual cycle affects a client's nutritional requirements	1.1 Describe the phases of the menstrual cycle 1.2 Describe how the menstrual cycle phases typically relate to nutritional adherence and exercise performance 1.3 Explain how the menstrual cycle may affect scale weight 1.4 Provide individualised recommendations to female clients wishing to adjust their nutritional intake across their cycle
2. Understand how to provide nutritional coaching for a prenatal client	2.1 Provide individualised recommendations for calorie intake during each trimester 2.2 Provide individualised guidance on healthy weight gain during pregnancy 2.3 Explain the risks associated with excessive or insufficient weight gain during pregnancy 2.4 Explain why certain foods should be minimised or avoided during pregnancy 2.5 Summarise the exercise recommendations that can be made to maximise mother and baby health during and after pregnancy
3. Understand the nutritional requirements for children	3.1 Describe the nutritional requirements of children under 12 3.2 Describe the process of discussing weight with children and teenagers compassionately and effectively 3.3 Identify simple tips for improving the nutritional intake of 'picky eaters'
4. Understand the nutritional considerations for older adults	4.1 Explain the nutritional requirements for older adults 4.2 Describe the pathophysiology of osteoporosis 4.3 Explain the nutritional and behavioural steps that can be taken to reduce the risk of developing osteoporosis 4.4 Describe the pathophysiology of sarcopenia 4.5 Explain the nutritional and behavioural steps that can be taken to reduce the risk of developing sarcopenia 4.6 Describe common barriers to a healthy diet for the older adult population
5. Understand the nutritional considerations for diabetic clients	5.1 Differentiate between type 1 and type 2 diabetes 5.2 Compare the nutritional requirements for a type 1 diabetic client and a non-diabetic client 5.3 Describe the nutritional approach for a type 2 diabetic client 5.4 Explain the role of exercise in diabetes management

Learning outcomes The learner will:	Assessment criteria The learner can:
6. Understand the nutritional considerations for clients with polycystic ovary syndrome	6.1 Describe the prevalence of polycystic ovary syndrome in the UK 6.2 Describe the pathophysiology of polycystic ovary syndrome 6.3 Explain the influence that polycystic ovary syndrome can have on weight management 6.4 Explain the influence that polycystic ovary syndrome can have on other areas of physiology, including fat storage patterns and body hair 6.5 Explain the nutritional and exercise approaches that may help manage polycystic ovary syndrome symptoms and associated psychological issues
7. Understand how to provide nutritional support to clients recovering from injury	7.1 Describe the process of injury recovery 7.2 Compare the energy requirements of injured and non-injured clients 7.3 Explain the psychological support a client will need during recovery from injury 7.4 Explain how to provide nutritional support for clients recovering from injury
8. Understand how to support clients with irritable bowel syndrome	8.1 Describe the symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome 8.2 Explain the importance of referring clients who show symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome to medical professionals 8.3 Explain the steps that can be taken to encourage a client to monitor and manage symptoms and flare-ups of irritable bowel syndrome
9. Understand how to support clients with allergies and intolerances	9.1 Differentiate between an allergy and an intolerance 9.2 Explain how the pathophysiology of an allergy or intolerance influences the effectiveness of testing 9.3 Describe the processes for allergy management 9.4 Describe the processes for intolerance management
10. Understand how to support clients with eating disorders	10.1 Describe the symptoms of common eating disorders, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anorexia nervosa</li> <li>• Bulimia nervosa</li> <li>• Binge eating disorder</li> <li>• Orthorexia</li> </ul> 10.2 Explain how to provide nutritional support to clients with an eating disorder
<b>Assessment</b>	eAssessment

## Occupational Descriptor

**Occupational Title:** Nutrition Coach\*

### Occupational Descriptor

A nutrition coach's role involves helping clients improve their nutritional intake by making non-prescriptive recommendations in line with the current body of evidence. They must understand nutrition well to be able to assist a wide variety of clients devise sustainable approaches to their nutritional intake that will achieve goals they may have while also maximising overall health. A nutrition coach acts as facilitator and advisor and can either work alone or with a fitness professional to help clients become healthier and achieve an improved body composition, or may work as part of a multidisciplinary team to help clients implement prescribed advice from dieticians or other medical professionals.

\*As recognised and insured by Financial Fitness Limited (Fitpro.theffg.co.uk)

### Occupational Roles

The nutrition coach should be involved in:

1. Collecting information relating to individual clients.
2. Carrying out nutritional assessments to establish current eating habits and patterns.
3. Analysing information relating to individual clients including beliefs, needs, values and wants, as well as special needs.
4. Identifying, agreeing and reviewing short-, medium- and long-term goals to ensure the effectiveness of nutritional recommendations.
5. Providing evidence based nutritional advice in line with client goals.
6. Provide clients with means of monitoring their food intake and the outputs associated with that for goal tracking.
7. Providing clients with accurate information on the principles of exercise/activity, sleep and stress management, and any special circumstances associated with the particular client at hand, and how these relate to weight management and health.
8. Developing and applying strategies to create autonomous and motivated clients.
9. Help clients adjust their environment in order to improve their nutritional habits.
10. Proactively interact and develop positive relationships with clients in order to facilitate client retention.
11. Promoting healthy activities and related strategies for daily living to clients/members.
12. Keeping up to-date with health and fitness industry developments to ensure high standards of advice that meet client needs in the short-, medium- and long-term goals.
13. Making the appropriate decisions relating to clients and their programmes/goals and, where required, referring the client to a more appropriate professional.
14. Working within their remit of practice, understanding their limitations and ensuring clients are aware of these from the beginning.

### Occupational Competence nutrition coaches should:

1. Be aware of their professional role boundaries as listed.
2. Give guidance to encourage special population clients\* to follow the nutritional recommendations specific to them.

\*Special population clients including:

- Under 18's (or their parents).
- Athletes.
- Older people (55+).
- Pre and postnatal women.



3. Get advice from and/or refer on to another appropriate professional if there are any objectives or risks that fall outside their professional boundaries or that they do not feel competent to deal with.

**Nutrition Coaches (who do not possess the appropriate special population qualification/s) should NOT:**

Be a specialist in the area of a given special population(s), or advertise as such. Specific gender clients do not fall under this umbrella.

- Prescribe nutritional approaches intended to treat or cure a disease.
- Instruct a client to disregard the advice of a medical professional.
- Diagnose any condition (coaches can ask clients to monitor symptoms and refer accordingly).
- Prescribe supplementation.
- Provide a prescriptive nutrition plan to any client.

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