

YMCA Level 4 Certificate in
Programming Physical Activity for
Individuals with Low Back Pain
(601/3505/0)

Qualification Specification



YMCA Awards

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Level 4 Certificate in Programming Physical Activity for Individuals with Low Back Pain

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Introduction

About YMCA Awards

At YMCA Awards, we are passionate about learner progress. Our qualifications support every learner, whether taking their first steps into fitness or simply wishing to boost their skills. Our high quality resources and assessment materials have been created by leading industry experts in consultation with employers and training providers.

YMCA Awards are an internationally recognised organisation. We are highly respected in health and fitness circles, and most importantly of all we have helped over 200, 000 people launch and advance their careers.

Qualification overview

This qualification is regulated by:

Ofqual
CCEA (Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment)
QW (Qualifications Wales).

Qualification aim

The aim of this qualification is to provide the learner with the appropriate knowledge and skills to design, deliver, monitor and evaluate structured, individualised physical activity programmes for adults with low back pain, in accordance with current evidence-based guidelines.

Overview of knowledge, skills and understanding

Knowledge and understanding relating to the qualification:

- epidemiology of low back pain
- risks and causative factors involved in the development of low back pain
- national guidelines for the treatment and management of low back pain
- contraindications and psychosocial considerations when planning physical activities for the client with low back pain (risk stratification)

Skills relating to the qualification:

- subjective and objective methods to collect enough information to plan safe and effective physical activity programmes for individuals with low back pain
- how to select safe and effective physical activities which are specific to the client's health status, risk stratification, needs and abilities
- the effective use of layering / layered cueing within progressive physical activity programmes for individuals with low back pain
- a range of validated methods used to monitor, review and adapt physical activity programmes for individuals with low back pain
- advice covering lifestyle, homecare and exercise which is suitable for the individual with low back pain.

Target group and age range

This qualification is aimed at a range of learners aged 16 and over.

Qualification structure

To achieve the YMCA Level 4 Certificate in Programming Physical Activity for Individuals with Low Back Pain, learners must complete 3 mandatory units for 16 credits.

Unit reference number	Unit title	Level	Credit
D/506/4372	Programming Physical Activities for Individuals with Low Back Pain	4	6
M/506/4375	Instructing Physical Activity Sessions for Individuals with Low Back Pain	4	4
T/506/4362	Principles and Epidemiology of Low Back Pain	4	6

The Total Qualification Time (TQT) for this qualification is 160. The Guided Learning Hours (GLH) assigned are 90 minimum.

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

This is an estimate of the total amount of time, measured in hours that a learner would reasonably need to be able to show the level of achievement necessary for the award of a qualification.

Total Qualification Time is made up of the following two elements:

- (a) the number of hours which an awarding organisation has assigned to a qualification for Guided Learning (see below), and
- (b) an estimate of the number of hours a Learner will reasonably be likely to spend in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training, including assessment, which takes place as directed by – but not under the immediate guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

This is:

- Face-to-face delivery (learning delivered by a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate member of the training team)
- E-learning with a lecturer, teacher or tutor present/available in real-time (the co-presence of learner and tutor can be either remote or in the same physical place)
- Invigilated assessment (external tests sat under controlled or open-book conditions)
- Internal assessment carried out by the learner with a lecturer, teacher or tutor present/available in real-time (the co-presence of learner and tutor can be either remote or in the same physical place).

This is **not**:

Unsupervised learning such as:

- E-learning that the learner carries out unsupervised and with no real-time support from a lecturer, teacher or tutor
- Assessment internally carried out by the learner without a lecturer, teacher or tutor present/available in real-time (for example, completing a Learner Assessment Record (LAR) at home)

- Any additional further study, revision and training activities that the learner does unsupervised to support their learning.

Recommended Guided Learning Hours – our ongoing review

Your External Quality Assurer (EQA) will ask you to feedback on GLH annually as part of the quality assurance visit. You should base your feedback on a typical learner taking this qualification and the time spent on supervised learning (GLH). If you feel the GLH is different from the above and you wish to feedback before your next EQA visit, please email us: awards.products@ymca.co.uk.

Entry requirements

- A Level 3 Exercise Referral qualification, OR, achievement of Level 4 Specialist Exercise Instructor qualifications before September 2011 plus achievement of a Level 3 fitness qualification
- 150 hours of relevant professional practice at Level 3 in designing, delivering, monitoring, adapting and tailoring exercise programmes for individuals gained within the previous two years and at least six months experience since qualification (to be evidenced in a CV and reference letter).

Opportunities for progression

Future employment possibilities

This qualification can lead to an enhanced role as a Specialist Exercise Instructor (Low Back Pain) within the active leisure sector; there is also employment potential within the health sector, for example as a Technical Instructor in the NHS.

Progression to further/higher level learning

This qualification provides progression to other qualifications, for example:

- Level 4 Certificate in Weight Management for Individuals with Obesity, Diabetes Mellitus and/or Metabolic Syndrome
- Any Level 4 specialist exercise instructor qualification.

Mapping to standards

This qualification has links to national occupational standard SKAEF23 – Design and manage supervised exercise referral programmes for medium-high risk participants with specific medical conditions. For more information please see www.ukstandards.org.uk.

Centre approval

This qualification can only be offered by centres approved by YMCA Awards to deliver it. Details of YMCA Awards approvals processes can be found on our website: www.ymcaawards.co.uk/centres/become-a-ymca-awards-centre.

Qualification approval

If your centre is already approved, you should only need to complete and submit a qualification approval form to deliver this qualification. However, you may also need to complete an additional staff approval form if the qualification is going to be delivered by staff who are not currently approved by YMCA Awards. Details of additional approvals can be found on our website: www.ymcaawards.co.uk/approvals.

Tutor, assessor and IQA approval requirements

To make sure you meet the most up-to-date requirements please see the YMCA Awards staff approval requirement document. This can be found on our website: www.ymcaawards.co.uk/centres/centre-guidance.

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Registration

All learners must be registered within the first 10% of the duration of their course (eg, for a course that lasts 10 days, learners should be registered on the first day of their course at the latest). For further details on registration please go to our website: www.ymcaawards.co.uk/registration.

Qualification availability

This qualification is available in:

England and regulated by Ofqual

Northern Ireland and regulated by CCEA (Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment).

Reasonable adjustments and special considerations

In making this qualification available, YMCA Awards has made every attempt to make sure that there are no unnecessary barriers to achievement. You can find full details of our reasonable adjustment and special considerations policy on our website: www.ymcaawards.co.uk/centres/policies-and-procedures.

Enquires and appeals procedures

YMCA Awards has an appeals procedure in accordance with the regulatory arrangements in the General Conditions of Recognition. Full details of these procedures are available on our website:

www.ymcaawards.co.uk/centres/policies-and-procedures.

Assessment and quality assurance

How the qualification is assessed

Assessment is the process of measuring a learner's skills, knowledge and understanding against the standards set in the qualification.

This qualification is a unit-based qualification and each unit contains learning outcomes and assessment criteria. Learning outcomes set out what the learner is expected to know, understand or be able to do as a result of the learning process. Assessment criteria detail the standards a learner is expected to meet and are broken down into what the learner 'can' do as a result of successfully achieving the unit.

The learner can be assessed holistically or individually as long as they show that the learning outcomes have been achieved.

Competency based learning outcomes (eg, be able to) are typically assessed through direct observation and these will take place in a real work environment. Where a real work environment is not stipulated the observation can be simulated and be internally assessed.

Knowledge based learning outcomes (eg, know or understand) can be assessed in a number of different ways such as worksheets, projects, professional discussion etc. The assessment method chosen should reflect the content of the unit.

This qualification must be assessed in line with YMCA Awards assessment policies and procedures www.ymcaawards.co.uk/centres/centre-guidance.

The YMCA Awards Level 4 Certificate in Programming Physical Activity for Individuals with Low Back Pain is assessed through a combination of internal and external assessment.

Internal assessment

YMCA Awards suggest the following approaches to internal assessment:

Using a Learner Assessment Record (LAR)

This document typically contains assessment guidance and paperwork developed by YMCA Awards to support the assessment of a qualification.

To check if a Learner Assessment Record is available for this qualification, please make sure you are logged in to the centre home on the website and follow this link: www.ymcaawards.co.uk/download-resources/lars.

Creating a portfolio of evidence

If a YMCA Awards Learner Assessment Record (LAR) is not used to evidence internal assessment then the learner must create a portfolio of evidence. Centres must work with learners to create this portfolio and need to make sure that the learner's portfolio shows coverage of the learning outcomes and/or assessment criteria where required.

A typical portfolio of evidence could include:

- Evidence index
- Assessor observation – completed observational checklists and related action plans
- Witness testimony
- Candidate's proof of work
- Worksheets
- Assignments/projects/reports/presentations
- Record of professional discussion
- Record of oral and written questioning
- Candidate and peer reports
- Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
- Summary of achievement.

Centres need to make sure assessment specifications and paperwork are signed off by the EQA before delivery.

As a guide to selecting appropriate assessment methods see the suggested example in the 'Qualification content' section of this specification.

External assessment

There is an externally set and internally marked theory assessment paper for this qualification. To access a mock paper, please log into the centre home page of YMCA Awards website and visit the following: www.ymcaawards.co.uk/download-resources/mock-papers.

Assessors

The role of the assessor is to make an informed judgement about the evidence a learner should provide to show they can meet the assessment criteria. For further guidance please see the 'Role of the assessor' document on the website: www.ymcaawards.co.uk/centres/centre-guidance.

Internal and external quality assurance

The role of the Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) is to make an informed judgement(s) regarding the practice of and decisions made by the assessment team to maintain standards. They are a vital link between the assessors and the External Quality Assurer (EQA). For further information on the role of the IQA and the EQA go to the website: www.ymcaawards.co.uk/centres/centre-guidance.

Qualification content

Unit specifications and recommended assessment methods

Programming Physical Activities for Individuals with Low Back Pain (D/506/4372)

Unit aim

To provide the learner with the skills needed to prescribe safe and effective physical activity programmes for individuals with low back pain.

Unit content

The learner will:

1 Understand how to risk stratify individuals with low back pain for participation in exercise

The learner can:

1.1 Describe contra-indications to exercise and red flags for the client with low back pain (LBP)

1.2 Describe psychosocial considerations (yellow flags) which need to be taken into account for the client with LBP

1.3 Describe a range of validated methods that can be used to assess and monitor the client with LBP

The learner will:

2 Be able to collect the information necessary to plan safe and effective physical activity programmes for individuals with low back pain

The learner can:

2.1 Use appropriate methods to collect sufficient subjective information to plan safe and effective physical activity programmes for a client with LBP

2.2 Use appropriate methods to collect sufficient *objective* information to plan safe and effective physical activity programmes for a client with LBP

2.3 Record information accurately

The learner will:

3 Be able to set SMART goals when programming for individuals with low back pain

The learner can:

3.1 Interpret information gathered during the initial consultation stage

3.2 Agree SMART goals with the client

3.3 Obtain informed consent from the client, parent or guardian

3.4 Record information accurately

The learner will:

4 Be able to design a progressive physical activity programme for individuals with low back pain

The learner can:

4.1 Provide advice covering:

- Lifestyle
- Homecare
- Exercise

4.2 Explain what is meant by layering / layered cueing

4.3 Select a range of safe and effective physical activities which:

- are specific to the client's health status, risk stratification, needs and abilities
- use layering to demonstrate suitable exercise prescription
- include alternatives, adaptations, and methods of progression

4.4 Incorporate regular monitoring procedures to ensure the programme remains safe and effective

4.5 Record plans in a format that will help the client and other professionals involved to implement the programme

The learner will:

5 Be able to review and adapt a physical activity programme for individuals with low back pain

The learner can:

5.1 Review with the client:

- Programme goals
- Activities
- Client performance
- Client confidence and self esteem
- Own performance

- Health and safety

5.2 Record the outcomes of review in an appropriate format

5.3 Agree changes/adaptations with the client

5.4 Record changes/adaptations to the programme in an appropriate format, suitable for use by:

- The instructor
- The client
- Medical professionals

Assessment specification

- Worksheet
- Case study (consultation)
- Case study (programme design)
- Case study (programme review)

Instructing Physical Activity Sessions for Individuals with Low Back Pain (M/506/4375)

Unit aim

To provide the learner with the skills needed to ensure safe and effective instruction of prescribed physical activity sessions for individuals with low back pain.

Unit content

The learner will:

1 Be able to prepare for the planned physical activity session for individuals with low back pain

The learner can:

1.1 Create a safe and appropriate physical activity environment

1.2 Clarify the aims and demands of the session with the client

1.3 Ensure the readiness of the client for the planned physical activity session

The learner will:

2 Be able to instruct a physical activity session for individuals with low back pain

The learner can:

2.1 Use layered cueing to instruct each movement sequence according to client performance

2.2 Progress or regress physical activities according to client's needs and abilities

2.3 Give explanations and demonstrations that are technically correct

2.4 Determine the client's understanding of explanations and instructions

2.5 Provide opportunities for client questioning and feedback throughout the session

2.6 Critically evaluate the performance of the client throughout the session, taking any necessary action

2.7 Utilise appropriate motivational strategies and psychological support throughout the session

2.8 Provide support to the client in a way which will enable them to self-manage their condition

The learner will:

3 Be able to analyse the effectiveness of the physical activity session in the context of the overall programme for individuals with low back pain

The learner can:

3.1 Evaluate the progress of the client

3.2 Discuss any proposed changes to the programme with the client

3.3 Modify or revise the programme accordingly

3.4 Record any modifications to the programme

The learner will:

4 Be able to evaluate the effectiveness of own instruction

The learner can:

4.1 Justify to what extent own instruction met the needs of the client

4.2 Evaluate the effectiveness of own instruction in meeting the session objectives

4.3 Identify strategies to improve personal performance based on self-evaluation and client feedback

Assessment specification

- Observed performance
- Session evaluation

Principles and Epidemiology of Low Back Pain (T/506/4362)

Unit aim

To provide learners with an understanding of the patterns, cause and effects of low back pain, current and recommended intervention strategies, and the cost on the nation.

Unit content

The learner will:

1 Understand the epidemiology of low back pain

The learner can:

1.1 Define low back pain (LBP)

1.2 Define non-specific low back pain (NSLBP)

1.3 Differentiate between NSLBP and specific spinal pathology definitions

1.4 Analyse the anatomy and physiology associated with LBP

1.5 Identify common causes of NSLBP

1.6 Analyse current national statistics on the prevalence of LBP, including its cost to the nation

1.7 Distinguish between acute, sub-acute and chronic instances of LBP

1.8 Describe the psychosocial components (yellow flags) associated with LBP

The learner will:

2 Understand the risks and causative factors involved in the development of low back pain

The learner can:

2.1 Describe psychological co-morbidities associated with the development of low back pain (LBP)

2.2 Evaluate the use of psychosocial interventions in the management of LBP

2.3 Compare the effects of activity and inactivity in the prevention and management of NSLBP

2.4 Recognise the importance of optimal movement patterns in the prevention and management of NSLBP

2.5 Explain the role that static posture plays in the prevalence of NSLBP

2.6 Explain the role that dynamic posture plays in the prevalence of NSLBP

2.7 Explain the role that activities play in the prevalence of NSLBP

The learner will:

3 Understand the national guidelines for the treatment and management of low back pain

The learner can:

3.1 List key national agencies and organisations involved in the treatment and management of LBP

3.2 Evaluate the effectiveness of different interventions used in the treatment and management of NSLBP

3.3 Define the scope of practice of a specialist exercise instructor in the treatment and management of LBP

3.4 Describe the roles of a specialist exercise instructor in the treatment and management of LBP

Assessment specification

- Theory paper (short and long answer)



YMCA Awards is one of the UK's leading health, fitness and wellbeing specific awarding organisations. It offers training centres and learners across the world a diverse suite of qualifications, from introductory (Level 1) to advanced levels (Level 4).

YMCA Awards issues over 30,500 qualification certificates a year, helping learners in the UK and overseas to launch and progress their careers in the active leisure sector.

*To view YMCA Awards' full range of qualifications please visit
www.ymcaawards.co.uk.*

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