
Qualification Specification

iSP3D31 - VTCT Skills (ITEC) Level 3 Diploma in Personal Training (Gym-based Exercise)

603/4495/7

About VTCT Skills

VTCT Skills is a market-leading specialist vocational and technical Awarding Organisation.

We offer a comprehensive range of qualifications, assessments and services in 17 sectors, including Hairdressing, Beauty, Logistics and Early Years. Working closely with employers and training providers, our ranges are backed by industry and trusted around the world.

With over 3,000 training locations, we help over 120,000 learners achieve professional skills that transform their lives, every year.

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Qualification at a glance

Qualification title	VTCT Skills (ITEC) Level 3 Diploma in Personal Training (Gym-based Exercise)
Qualification number	603/4495/7
Product code	iSP3D31
First registration date	01/10/2019
Age range	16-18, 19+
Credit value	52
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	520
Guided Learning (GL) hours	346
Assessment	To be awarded this qualification, learners must successfully achieve the following assessments: • External practical examination • External theory examination • Portfolio of evidence containing - Performance evidence - Assignment - Case studies - Interview
Grading	Pass/Merit/Distinction
Entry requirements	It is recommended that learners hold a Level 2 Certificate Exercise and Fitness. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that learners have the required knowledge, understanding and skills to enrol and successfully achieve this qualification.

About this qualification

Aims and objectives

The main aim of the VTCT Skills (ITEC) Level 3 Diploma in Personal Training (Gym-based Exercise) is to enable learners to gain the necessary practical and theoretical skills in order to provide personal training and gym-based exercise to the general public and to gain employment in the fitness industry. This qualification is suitable for learners aged 16 and over and is designed to provide occupational competence at level 3. It also provides a sound platform into further training at level 3 and 4.

Content

This qualification is for learners who want to work within the fitness industry. The qualification consists of 10 mandatory units with a total of 346 hours of Guided Learning (GL) to achieve the full qualification.

The main skills the learner will perform are:

- Collecting participant information using a variety of methods including the use of a physical activity readiness questionnaire (PARQ) – vital to understanding the needs of clients and knowing when to adapt the fitness routine
- Health, safety and welfare – contextualised to the environment the learners will be working in
- Planning and instructing gym-based exercise including identifying different methods of adapting a gym-based exercise programme to ensure appropriate progression and/or regression
- Programming personal training with clients and identifying short, medium and long term goals
- Delivering personal training sessions including adapting the planned exercise to meet the clients' needs, monitoring clients' progress during exercise, giving clients feedback and discussing their performance
- Applying the principles of nutrition and identifying clients who are at risk from nutritional deficiencies
- Supporting clients who take part in gym-based exercise and fitness

The learner will also learn about client care and communication which is essential to work and be successful in the industry.

This qualification also provides:

- The related knowledge and understanding required to perform the personal training and fitness skills listed above effectively, in particular the anatomy and physiology of the body and common diseases and disorders that may affect when a client should or should not take part in exercise
- Opportunities for learners to focus on the development of their wider skills in a personal training and fitness setting such as communicating with clients, working with others and problem solving
- Opportunities for learners to develop a range of skills, techniques, personal qualities and attitudes essential for successful performance in employment as a personal trainer and gym-based fitness instructor

Opportunities for progression

Once learners have achieved the VTCT Skills (ITEC) Level 3 Diploma in Personal Training (Gym-based Exercise) they may progress on to other VTCT Skills or equivalent qualifications at level 3 and 4 for example:

- Level 3 Diploma in Pilates Teaching
- Level 3 Diploma in Yoga Teaching
- Level 3 Diploma in Sports Massage
- Level 4 Certificate in Sports Massage
- Level 4 Diploma in Spa and Salon Management

Opportunities for employment

There are opportunities for a personal trainer to find employment in a variety of areas:

- Gym
- Health club
- Spa
- Cruise ships
- Hotels or resorts
- Own fitness studio
- Own business

Qualification structure

To be awarded the VTCT Skills (ITEC) Level 3 Diploma in Personal Training (Gym-based Exercise), Learners must achieve all mandatory units.

The minimum GLH required to achieve this qualification is 346

The minimum TQT required to achieve this qualification is 520

Table 1

Unit code	Mandatory units	Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	Unit reference number	Unit weighting for the overall qualification grade
iUSP159	Anatomy and physiology for exercise	41	K/617/5646	25%
iUSP179	Health, safety and welfare in a fitness environment	16	Y/617/5688	0
iUSP143	Principles of exercise, fitness and health	28	L/617/5610	0
iUSP172	Know how to support clients who take part in exercise and physical activity	13	F/617/5670	0
iUSP152	Planning gym-based exercise	23	H/617/5628	0
iUSP144	Instructing gym-based exercise	37	D/617/5613	25%
iUSP169	Applying the principles of nutrition to a physical activity programme	40	M/617/5664	0
iUSP146	Anatomy and physiology for exercise and health	43	H/617/5614	25%
iUSP154	Programming personal training with clients	47	K/617/5632	0
iUSP164	Delivering personal training sessions	58	H/617/5659	25%

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

Guided Learning Hours is 'the activity of a learner in being taught or instructed by – or otherwise participating in education or training under the immediate guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training'. This includes 'the activity of being assessed if the assessment takes place under the immediate guidance or supervision of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training'.

Total Qualification Time (TQT)

Total Qualification Time is the number of notional hours which represents an estimate of the total amount of time that could reasonably be expected to be required, in order for a learner to achieve and demonstrate the achievement of the level of attainment necessary for the award of the qualification.

Assessment

All performance evidence, internal assessments, assignments and underpinning knowledge must be completed prior to the final summative internal practical assessment.

The summative internal practical assessment will be carried out by the lecturer/assessor and verified by an external quality assurer at the end of the period of learning. The external quality assurer will also verify a sample of the performance evidence.

Table 2

Unit code	Mandatory units	Assessment	Grading
iUSP159	Anatomy and physiology for exercise	MCQ	Pass 50%-74% Merit 75%-89% Distinction 90%-100%
iUSP179	Health, safety and welfare in a fitness environment	Portfolio of evidence – Assignment	Pass/Refer
iUSP143	Principles of exercise, fitness and health	Portfolio of evidence – Assignment	Pass/Refer
iUSP172	Know how to support clients who take part in exercise and physical activity	Portfolio of evidence – Assignment	Pass/Refer
iUSP152	Planning gym-based exercise	Portfolio of evidence – 3 performances	Pass/Refer
iUSP144	Instructing gym-based exercise	Portfolio of evidence – 2 performances	Pass/Refer
		1 summative internal practical assessment	Pass 60%-74% Merit 75%-89% Distinction 90%-100%
iUSP169	Applying the principles of nutrition to a physical activity programme	Portfolio of evidence – Case study	Pass/Refer
iUSP146	Anatomy and physiology for exercise and health	MCQ	Pass 50%-74% Merit 75%-89% Distinction 90%-100%
iUSP154	Programming personal training with clients	Portfolio of evidence – 3 performances	Pass/Refer
		Portfolio of evidence – basic exercise plans (5 plans)	Pass/Refer

iUSP164	Delivering personal training sessions	Portfolio of evidence – 3 performances	Pass/Refer
		Portfolio of evidence – Interview	Pass 60%-74% Merit 75%-89% Distinction 90%-100%

Unit specifications and additional supporting material for this qualification can be found on the VTCT Skills website.

Grading of the qualification

Learners must achieve a Pass grade or higher in the requisite number of units as specified in the rules of combination, see table 1 above. Only mandatory units which are graded Pass/Merit/Distinction will contribute to the overall grade.

Practical examinations and theory examinations will be graded Pass/Merit/Distinction.

Portfolio of evidence containing the following will be graded Pass/Fail:

- Performance evidence
- Assignments
- Case studies
- Interview

The overall qualification is graded Pass/Merit/Distinction.

Grade boundaries for units and the overall calculation for the qualification grade are open to annual review. Following this review, these boundaries and overall calculations can be adjusted by VTCT Skills. This review and possible change within a qualification are to ensure the standard of the qualification grade is upheld throughout the qualification's lifecycle.

Theory examination

All theory tests must be conducted in a controlled environment and follow the procedures defined by VTCT Skills. The theory tests will be set and marked by VTCT Skills. The centre is responsible for ensuring the examination can operate seamlessly by organising the process as defined in the 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations' which can be found on the VTCT Skills website.

Practical examination

Once all aspects of the mandatory units have been completed, learners will be expected to complete a summative internal practical assessment. This will be undertaken by the internal assessor/lecturer using the internal assessment forms. These must be verified by the external quality assurer.

All practical assessments must be conducted in a controlled environment defined by VTCT Skills. The summative internal practical assessment will be conducted by the lecturer/assessor and verified by the external quality assurer. The centre is responsible for ensuring the examination can operate seamlessly by organising the process as defined in the 'Instructions for Conducting Examinations' which can be found on the VTCT Skills website. The marking criteria and marking scheme can be found under the documents tab within the qualification.

Portfolio of evidence

Learners are required to provide evidence of performance and/or case studies that they have performed on clients during their training under the supervision of the lecturer who will monitor the quality of the treatments in order to ensure that they meet the criteria.

- The criteria are detailed on the performance evidence guidance forms
- The learner will need to complete a client consultation form as evidence that they performed the required number of performances during their training (see Table 2) as they form part of the internal assessment for the qualification. They can be stored in the learner's portfolio

Learners are required to provide assignments under the supervision of the lecturer who will monitor the quality of the assignments in order to ensure that they meet the criteria.

- The criteria are detailed on the assignment guidance forms and form part of the internal assessment for the qualification

Quality assurance

Delivery of the qualification

A scheme of work must be approved by VTCT Skills for all units prior to the commencement of the course.

Lecturers should aim to deliver the theory and practical of each unit simultaneously, i.e., both theory and practical of each unit should be taught together to ensure the underpinning knowledge is being delivered at the same time as the practical skills. This will help to ensure that learners understand the structures they are working on as a result of combining delivery with the practical application of treatments.

Centre resources

The organisation delivering the qualification must provide a suitable environment for teaching the VTCT Skills (ITEC) Level 3 Diploma in Personal Training (Gym-based Exercise) as well as all equipment both fixed and free standing to complete all aspects of the qualification.

Achievement record

All units will require an Achievement Record to be completed by the lecturer for each learner. This achievement record will need to be kept by the centre and may be sampled by the external examiner or external quality assurer on their visit.

An Achievement Record for each unit can be downloaded from the VTCT Skills website.

Document History

Version	Issue Date	Changes	Role
v0.6	14/05/2019	Draft version published to inform centres prior to September launch.	Systems Integration Team
v1.0	16/09/2019	First published	Head of Qualifications and Processing
v2.0	03/12/2019	Grading boundary review statement added	Qualifications Administrator
v3.0	01/09/2020	Added COVID-19 Infection Prevention pre-requisite	Product and Regulation Manager
v4.0	27/10/2020	Removal of NOS reference	Qualifications Administrator
v5.0	01/08/2022	Removal of the COVID-19 Infection Prevention pre-requisite	Qualifications Administrator
v6.0	01/01/2025	New branding	Development Administrator
v7.0	22/07/2026	Rebranding	Development Administrator