



## Qualification Specification

# STA Level 2 Award in Aquacise



**CIMSPA**<sup>®</sup>  
Endorsed

Professional  
Standards



## This qualification is regulated by Ofqual (England)

### STA Level 2 Award in Aquacise

Qualification Number: 610/3863/5

#### Unit Structure

This qualification consists of 3 mandatory units

Unit Title	Code	Unit Level	GLH
Understanding Anatomy and Physiology in Relation to Exercise	T/651/0526	2	21
Understand the Scientific Principles and Safety Requirements Relevant to Aquatic Exercise	Y/651/0527	2	3
Understanding the Role and Responsibilities of an Aquacise Instructor in Planning, Delivering and Evaluating an Aquacise Session	A/651/0528	2	24

GLH = Guided learning hours

#### Total Qualification Time 57 Hours

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#### Qualification Delivery

The recommended contact hours for this qualification are 24 hours which includes direct teaching and assessing but excludes breaks.

The additional guided learning hours are taken from pre-course online learning.

The course may be run over 3 days, but can also be delivered over a period of weeks, with the minimum of each training session being 2 hours.

The ratio for this qualification is a maximum of 12 learners to 1 tutor.

## Introduction

Aquacise instructors are able to seek employment in a wide variety of leisure facilities including private health clubs, school swimming pools through to local authority leisure centres. As an aquacise instructor, you would be responsible for planning, instructing and evaluating fun, motivating and inclusive aquacise classes, instructing a range of aquatic exercises adapted to individual participant needs. You would be responsible for ensuring the class area and appropriate equipment was safe and promoted good instructing and progression.

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## Qualification Objective

The STA Award in Aquacise aims to train learners to plan, instruct and evaluate fun, motivating and inclusive aquacise classes to participants.

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## Target Learners

This qualification is for learners who wish to work as an aquacise instructor. There is no previous experience required however, it is strongly recommended learners have participated in group exercise classes prior to undertaking this qualification.

This qualification could appeal to those interested in pursuing a career in the leisure industry, those already employed within a leisure environment who are looking to progress their career, or those who are already working as a swimming teacher or fitness instructor who wish to instruct aquacise.

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## Progression

Aquacise instructors may wish to become responsible for co-ordinating or managing aquacise classes within the pool programme or share their knowledge and experience with the next generation of aquacise instructors by becoming an aquacise tutor.

Learners may also wish to develop knowledge and skills in specialist areas such as aquanatal, by completing further CPD's.

Alternatively learners may wish to complete additional vocational qualifications within the aquatic industry across swimming teaching, lifesaving, first aid, health and safety and pool plant to support a career in the leisure industry.

Upon successful completion of STA Award in Aquacise, learners will be eligible for CIMSPA Affiliate membership and are encouraged to join the CIMSPA Exercise and Fitness Directory.



## Industry Standards

STA Award in Aquacise references the following industry guidance documents:

- CIMSPA Professional Standard: Core Group Exercise Instructor
  - STA Swimming Teaching Code of Practice
  - HSG179 HSE Health and Safety in Swimming Pools.
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## Entry Requirements

- Be 16 years of age or older.

A level of personal fitness is necessary as learners will be required participate in practical aquacise classes during the course.

It is advisable that learners have a minimum of level 1 in literacy and numeracy or equivalent.

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## Pre-course Online Programmes

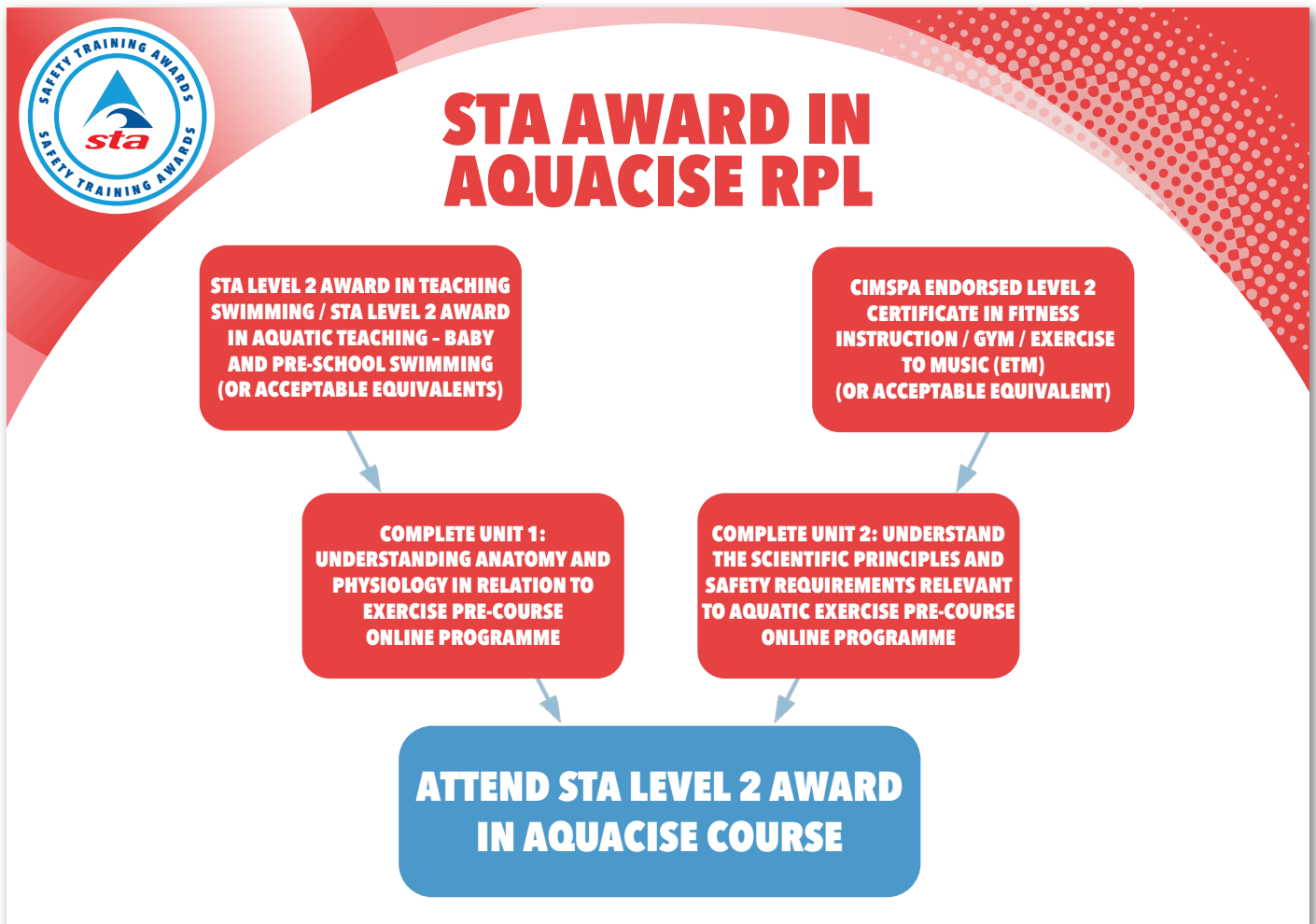
Learners must have independently completed the below units prior to attending an STA Award in Aquacise course:

- Unit 1: Understanding Anatomy and Physiology in Relation to Exercise
- Unit 2: Understand the Scientific Principles and Safety Requirements Relevant to Aquatic Exercise.

Tutors must obtain evidence of completion of the STA pre-course online programmes in the form of certificates which must be retained by the Approved Training Centre (ATC) for quality assurance purposes.

## Recognition of Prior Learning

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) can be applied for selected pre-course online programmes depending on a learner's qualification. Should RPL be applied, learners must complete all hours of the tutor led course and assessment. RPL is only available for the online programmes. ATCs must gain copies of the qualification certificate and ensure they are accepted before RPL is approved. Copies of certificates must be retained by the ATC for quality assurance purposes.



Note: If a learner does not hold an STA Award in Teaching Swimming, STA BPS or a CIMSPA endorsed Certificate in Fitness Instruction / Gym / ETM, they must complete both online programmes.

## Special Considerations and Reasonable Adjustments Policies

For further information on these, please refer to the policies section on the Safety Training Awards website:

<https://www.safetytrainingawards.co.uk/policies/>

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## Awarding Organisation Policies

A full list of awarding organisation policies are available on the website: <https://www.safetytrainingawards.co.uk>

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## Assessment Format

Competent / Not competent.

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## Assessment Methods

The STA Award in Aquacise is tutor assessed through the completion of a series of aquacise session plans, a session evaluation form and practical instructing.

In addition to this, there are two pre-course online theory programmes with multiple-choice question assessment.

On the final day of the course, learners are assessed by the tutor delivering a 20-minute segment of an aquacise session to participants and there is an end of course theory multiple-choice question assessment.

On successful completion of STA Award in Aquacise, learners will have completed and been assessed on:

- Developing 3 x aquacise session plans: shallow water, transitional water, and deep water
- Completing 1 x session evaluation form
- Delivering practical instructing to participants.

All learning outcomes and assessment criteria in the qualification units must be achieved in order for a learner to be deemed competent and pass the course.

All practical elements must be completed and performed independently by the learner without prompting by the tutor.

The skills within the course and during the assessments must be performed in line with the most current version of the STA Award in Aquacise resource manual.

The multiple-choice assessment paper must be completed in exam conditions, with the tutor or other approved person, acting as the invigilator. Learners must achieve a minimum mark or higher to successfully pass the multi-choice assessment paper.

All learners must be aware of the assessment procedures and when the assessment is taking place.

Tutors should refer to the STA Award in Aquacise Assessment Strategy for detailed guidance on the assessment process.

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## Re-Assessment

If a learner is unsuccessful in the end-of-course assessment, the learner is only required to re-sit the required assessment element, for example:

- If a learner fails the practical, they are only required to re-sit the practical element
- If a learner fails the multiple-choice assessment paper, they are only required to re-sit the assessment paper. If a learner should fail the multiple-choice assessment paper, they are only required to re-sit the unit(s) they failed.

The re-sit of a theory assessment paper or a practical assessment must be completed within six weeks from the failure date.

Due to the type of qualification being a license to practice competency-based qualification, we can only permit 1 assessment re-sit. If a learner has been unsuccessful following a re-sit, the learner must undertake another full course of instruction.

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## Tutor / Assessor Requirements

All tutors must have the skills, knowledge and experience to be able to teach and demonstrate the subject.

Each tutor must be approved by Safety Training Awards and provide evidence of:

1. STA Award in Aquacise qualification (or acceptable equivalent)
2. Hold a formal tutoring and assessing qualification
3. Maintaining their technical competence within the subject area and provide evidence of continuing professional development (CPD).

## IQA Requirements

Internal Quality Assurers (IQAs) of this qualification must have knowledge and competency in aquacise as well as knowledge and competency in internal quality assurance.

An IQA must hold:

1. STA Award in Aquacise qualification (or acceptable equivalent)
2. Complete STA IQA CPD or hold a recognised internal quality assurance qualification.

Note: IQAs cannot quality assure a course for which they were a learner, the tutor and / or assessor.

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## Resource Requirements

Course resources:

- STA Award in Aquacise resource manual - Each learner is required to have their own copy of the resource manual to keep during and after the course, in order to have access to the theoretical knowledge of the qualification
- A range of suitable aquacise equipment such as:
  - Woggles
  - Hand-buoys
  - Webbed mitts
  - Aqua floatation belts
  - Tethers / resistance tubes
  - Aqua step
  - Balls
  - Paddles
  - Appropriate music system.
- In order to fulfil the practical requirements of this qualification, access to an appropriate aquatic facility is required on each day of the course. The facility should meet the required temperature and depth requirements for instructing aquacise in shallow, transitional and deep water. A minimum depth of 1.2 metres is recommended and a gradual slope of the pool bottom is preferred to accommodate varying heights of participants
- In order to fulfil the practical instructing requirements, learners should be able to instruct a range of participants during practical sessions throughout the course.



## Venue

- Room size: Adequate space for all learners on the course to undertake theory and practical work
- Seats: One per learner
- Writing surfaces: Adequate for each learner to take notes
- Toilets: Separate facilities for male and female learners
- Ventilation: Should be adequate
- Lighting: Should be suitable for reading, combining a mixture of natural and artificial light
- Heating: Should maintain a 'short sleeve' environment, minimum temperature 16°C
- Access / egress: Should be accessible, safe, well lit and cater for all learners needs
- Floor coverings: Should be carpeted or mats / blankets provided for use during practical sessions
- Cleanliness: Maintain a clean, tidy and hygienic environment
- Noise: Consider whether there is noise that may distract learners from training
- Electrical items: When projectors and other electrical equipment are used, the equipment must be checked to ensure it is in safe working order. It is important to be aware of trip hazards associated with electric cables in order to reduce such risks.

## Unit Specification

Unit Title	Understanding Anatomy and Physiology in Relation to Exercise
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
1. Understand the structure and function of the circulatory system	1.1 Identify the location and function of the heart 1.2 Describe the structure of the heart 1.3 Describe how blood moves through the four chambers of the heart 1.4 Describe systemic and pulmonary circulation 1.5 Identify the structure and functions of blood vessels 1.6 Define blood pressure 1.7 Identify blood pressure classifications
2. Understand the structure and function of the respiratory system	2.1 Identify the location and function of the lungs 2.2 Describe the structure of the lungs 2.3 Identify the main muscles involved in breathing 2.4 Describe the passage of air through the respiratory tract 2.5 Describe the process of gaseous exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the lungs
3. Understand the structure and function of the skeleton	3.1 Describe the basic functions of the skeleton 3.2 Identify the structures of the axial skeleton 3.3 Identify the structures of the appendicular skeleton 3.4 Explain the classification of bones 3.5 Explain the structure of long bone 3.6 Explain the stages of bone growth 3.7 Describe posture in terms of curves of the spine
4. Understand joints in the skeleton	4.1 Describe the classification of joints 4.2 Describe the structure of synovial joints 4.3 Describe the types of synovial joints and their range of motion 4.4 Describe joint movement potential and joint actions
5. Understand the muscular system	5.1 Identify the three types of muscle tissue 5.2 Define the characteristics and functions of the three types of muscle tissue 5.3 Describe the basic structure and function of skeletal muscle 5.4 Name and locate the anterior skeletal muscles 5.5 Name and locate the posterior skeletal muscles 5.6 Describe the structure and function of the pelvic floor muscles 5.7 Describe the different types of muscle action 5.8 Identify the joint actions brought about by specific muscle groups 5.9 Identify skeletal muscle fibre types and their characteristics
6. Understand the life-course of the musculoskeletal system and its implications for special populations exercise	6.1 Describe the life-course of the musculoskeletal system and its implications for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people in the 13-18 age range</li> <li>• Antenatal and postnatal women</li> <li>• Older people (50 plus)</li> </ul>
7. Understand energy systems and their relation to exercise	7.1 Describe how carbohydrates, fats and proteins are used in the production of energy / adenosine triphosphate 7.2 Explain the use of the three energy systems during aerobic and anaerobic exercise 7.3 Describe the by-products of the energy systems in relation to muscle fatigue
8. Understand the nervous system and its relation to exercise	8.1 Describe the role and functions of the nervous system 8.2 Describe the principles of muscle contraction 8.3 Describe the 'all or none law' / motor unit recruitment 8.4 Describe how exercise can enhance neuromuscular connections and improve motor fitness

Unit Title	Understanding Anatomy and Physiology in Relation to Exercise	
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
9. Understand the digestive system and its relation to exercise	9.1	Identify the function of the following in the digestive system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mouth</li> <li>• Pharynx</li> <li>• Oesophagus</li> <li>• Stomach</li> <li>• Pancreas</li> <li>• Gallbladder and bile ducts</li> <li>• Liver</li> <li>• Small intestine</li> <li>• Large intestine</li> </ul>
10. Understand the anatomical planes of movement	9.2	Describe how fats, proteins and carbohydrates are digested and absorbed in the digestive system
	9.3	Identify the role of fibre in the maintenance of gut function
	9.4	Identify the role of the liver and the pancreas in assisting digestion
	9.5	Identify the timescales for digestion
	9.6	Describe the importance of fluid intake in relation to digestion
11. Understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle	10.1	Identify the movements that occur in each anatomical plane of movement
	10.2	Identify anatomical terms of location
	10.3	Identify the effect of exercise variables on biomechanics and kinesiology
	11.1	State the components of a healthy lifestyle
	11.2	Identify factors which affect health and well-being
	11.3	Identify the physical activity guidelines to maintain a healthy lifestyle
	11.4	Describe the benefits of physical activity to health and well-being
	11.5	Identify the national healthy eating recommendations
	11.6	Explain the health risks of poor nutrition
	11.7	Describe the energy balance equation
	11.8	Explain the importance of adequate hydration
	11.9	Describe the implications of obesity in the UK
	11.10	Describe how physical activity can help to prevent and manage common health conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coronary heart disease</li> <li>• Stroke</li> <li>• Type 2 diabetes</li> <li>• Cancer</li> <li>• Hypertension</li> <li>• Obesity</li> <li>• Mental health problems</li> <li>• Musculoskeletal conditions</li> </ul>
12. Understand how to promote a healthy lifestyle	12.1	Identify sources of evidence-based health and well-being advice
	12.2	State the importance of evidence-based practice
	12.3	Identify how to communicate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle to participants within professional role boundaries
	12.4	Identify when to proactively engage with participants
	12.5	Describe when a participant should be referred to another professional regarding their healthy lifestyle
	12.6	Identify how technology can assist in a participant's healthy lifestyle
13. Understand how to support participants to change their physical activity behaviour	13.1	Identify barriers to physical activity
	13.2	Describe the different behaviour change approaches to encourage physical activity
	13.3	Describe intrinsic and extrinsic motivation
	13.4	Explain why it is important to take personal responsibility for own fitness and motivation
	13.5	Identify techniques that can motivate adherence to physical activity
	13.6	Describe how to set short-, medium- and long-term SMART goals
	13.7	Identify how to review and revise short-, medium- and long-term SMART goals

Unit Title	Understanding Anatomy and Physiology in Relation to Exercise	
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
14. Understand the principles of fitness training	14.1 14.2 14.3 14.4 14.5 14.6 14.7 14.8	Define the components of fitness Identify the principles and variables of fitness / training State the difference between programming exercise for fitness and health benefits State the guidelines for developing the different components of fitness Identify the main group exercise training sessions available Identify reasons for temporary deferral of exercise State the importance of verbal screening and how to conduct this State the benefits and limitation of different methods of monitoring exercise intensity
15. Understand how to maximise the customer experience	15.1 15.2 15.3 15.4 15.5 15.6 15.7 15.8 15.9 15.10 15.11 15.12 15.13 15.14 15.15 15.16 15.17 15.18	Identify customer types within a fitness facility Identify the different requirements of customers attending a local exercise and fitness facility Identify how a local exercise and fitness facility meets different types of customer requirements Describe how to identify and confirm a customer's expectations Identify different types of communication Identify different methods to engage with customers Identify different methods to build rapport with customers Identify ways to build social support and inclusion within the fitness facility environment Explain the importance of gathering feedback to meet customer expectations Identify methods of gathering customer feedback Describe the feedback cycle and the impact on the customer experience Explain the importance of responding promptly to a customer seeking assistance Identify the products and services within a fitness facility which may be available to customers Describe the personal attributes required to display a high level of customer service in an fitness environment Identify how an aquacise instructor can present themselves in a professional manner Describe how an aquacise instructor can influence customer retention Explain how to influence a customer journey in a fitness environment Identify different types of conflict and how to manage them
16. Understand the requirements to run a business	16.1 16.2 16.3 16.4	Identify the components of financial planning Identify the importance of social media Describe the use of social media and its impact within a business Identify how to set up a professional social media profile

## Unit Specification

Unit Title	Understand the Scientific Principles and Safety Requirements Relevant to Aquatic Exercise	
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
1. Understand the legislation relevant to an aquacise instructor	1.1 1.2 1.3	Identify relevant legislation for an aquacise instructor Identify relevant codes of conduct / ethics to an aquacise instructor Identify how to keep records securely
2. Understand the Pool Safety Operating Procedures	2.1 2.2	Identify topics within the Normal Operating Plan Identify topics within the Emergency Action Plan
3. Know how to identify risks in an aquatic environment	3.1 3.2 3.3	Identify the five steps in a risk assessment Identify hazards relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical</li> <li>• Activity</li> <li>• People</li> <li>• Pool Operations</li> </ul> Describe how to manage common hazards within an aquatic environment
4. Understand the hygiene and safety requirements of an aquatic environment	4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4 4.5	Identify the hygiene requirements of an aquatic environment Identify the safety requirements of an aquatic environment Identify the hygiene and safety checks required for the safe use of equipment Identify the cleaning products which can be used to clean aquacise equipment Describe how to store and maintain equipment safely during and after a session
5. Understand the aquatic scientific principles	5.1 5.2 5.3 5.4 5.5 5.6	Describe how the body floats in water Define buoyancy Identify methods of propulsion Identify methods of resistance Describe hydrostatic pressure Describe the changes that occur upon the body when immersed in water
6. Understand the effects the aquatic environment has upon aquacise sessions	6.1 6.2 6.3 6.4	Describe the effects water temperature has upon planning a session Describe the effects air temperature has upon planning a session Describe the effect humidity has upon an aquacise session Describe the effects of thermoregulation



## Unit Specification

Unit Title	Understanding the Role and Responsibilities of an Aquacise Instructor in Planning, Delivering and Evaluating an Aquacise Session	
Learning Outcomes	Assessment Criteria	
1. Understand the role of an aquacise instructor	1.1	Identify the role and responsibilities of an aquacise instructor
	1.2	Identify qualities of an aquacise instructor
2. Understand the personal and professional development requirements	2.1	Identify how an aquacise instructor keeps their skills and knowledge up to date
	2.2	Identify the benefits of continual professional development (CPD)
	2.3	Identify the current guidelines relating to continual professional development (CPD)
3. Understand the structure of aquacise sessions	3.1	Identify equipment which can be used within an aquacise session
	3.2	Identify the safe use of equipment
	3.3	Identify instructing methods which can be used within an aquacise session
	3.4	Identify methods of group organisation within an aquacise session
	3.5	Describe the different communication methods used within an aquacise session
	3.6	Identify considerations when including non-swimmers into an aquacise session
4. Know how to incorporate music into an aquacise session	4.1	Identify the legal requirements using music
	4.2	Identify how music can be used within an aquacise session
5. Understand exercises and how they can be used within an aquacise session	5.1	Identify exercises which can be used within each aquacise section:
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm up</li> <li>• Cardiovascular</li> <li>• Muscle condition / resistance</li> <li>• Stretching / flexibility</li> <li>• Cool down</li> </ul>
5.2		Describe how to adapt and modify exercises to regress, progress and suit individual client needs
5.3		Describe how to use the water to regress or progress exercises
5.4		Describe the effect water has upon the body within an aquacise session
5.5		Identify the benefits of exercise in water
6. Be able to plan aquacise sessions	6.1	Develop a series of aquacise session plans to meet participants' needs
7. Be able to deliver aquacise sessions	7.1	Demonstrate instructing a safe and appropriate warm up within an aquacise session
7.2		Demonstrate instructing a safe and appropriate cardiovascular section within an aquacise session
7.3		Demonstrate instructing a safe and appropriate muscle conditioning section within an aquacise session
7.4		Demonstrate instructing a safe and appropriate cool down including stretching within an aquacise session
7.5		Demonstrate effectively creating and instructing combinations of movement
8. Be able to carry out an aquacise session in a professional manner	8.1	Demonstrate a professional manner during an aquacise session
8.2		Demonstrate gathering health information and responding appropriately prior to an aquacise session
8.3		Demonstrate exemplary customer service skills
8.4		Demonstrate effective communication with participants within the session
8.5		Create a positive, motivating and empowering environment to support participants
8.6		Demonstrate supporting participants to recognise and develop their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation
8.7		Maintain participant safety and well-being at all times during an aquacise session
	8.8	Demonstrate the ability to work alone and as part of a team

<b>Unit Title</b>	Understanding the Role and Responsibilities of an Aquacise Instructor in Planning, Delivering and Evaluating an Aquacise Session
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria</b>
9. Be able to evaluate Aquacise sessions	9.1 Perform an evaluation of an aquacise session including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Own performance</li> <li>• Participants performance</li> <li>• Appropriateness of the session to group to meet participants' needs</li> <li>• Effectiveness of communication and supporting participants needs</li> <li>• Future changes to session to meet participants needs</li> <li>• Personal development</li> </ul>